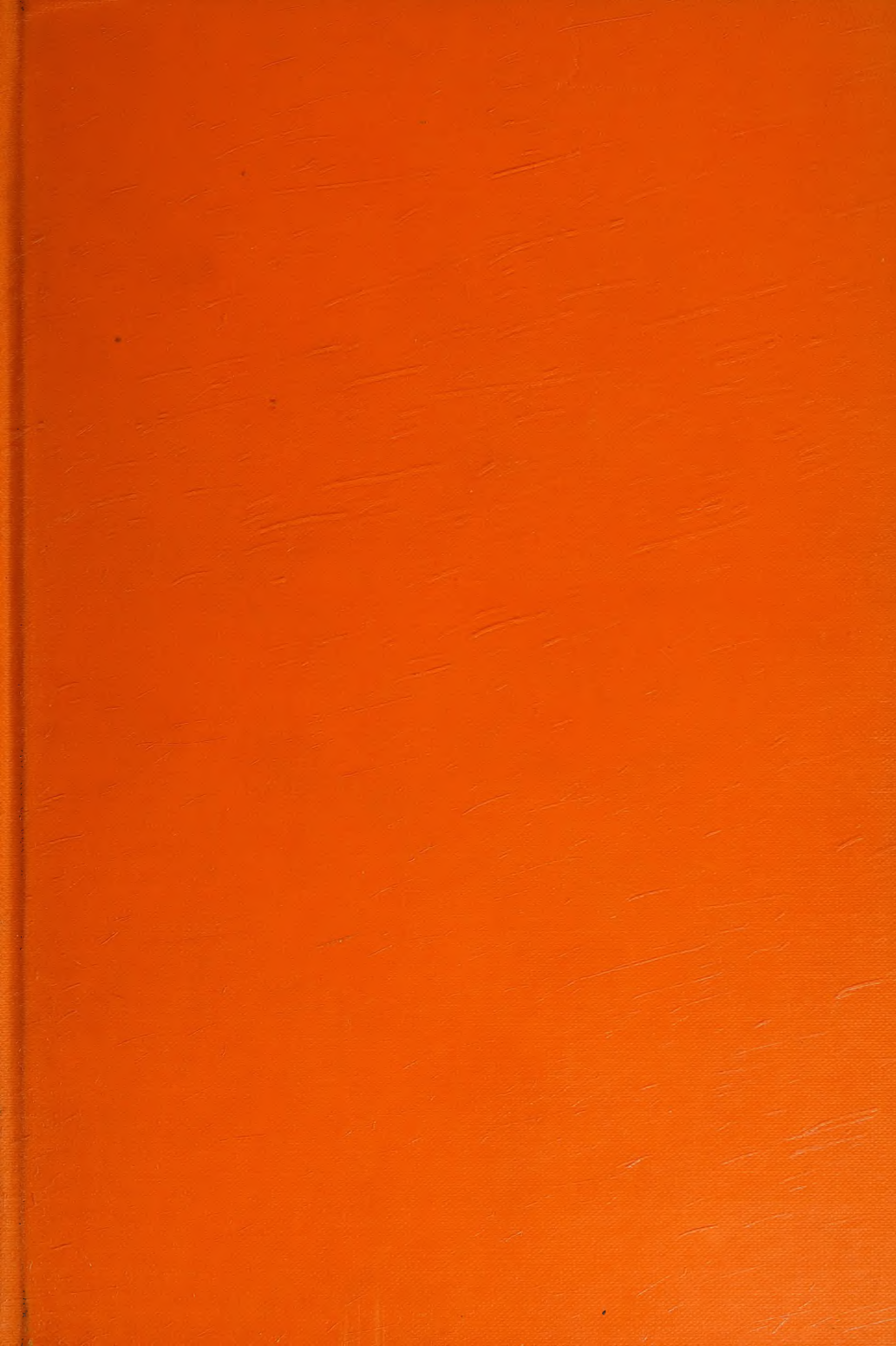




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Crying Our Wares

Crying Our Wares

HOWARD W. DICKINSON

Author of "Primer of Promotion"

THE JOHN DAY COMPANY

New York

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To My Wife

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About the Author

HOWARD W. DICKINSON was born at Elgin, Illinois, in 1869. He was educated at Marietta Academy and Marietta College, from which he was graduated in 1889. In 1891 he received his A.B. degree at Harvard, where he specialized in Chemistry and Physics. Following his graduation he was for several years a teacher of science. He is now a trustee of Marietta College.

After five years as New England manager of *Good Housekeeping* magazine Mr. Dickinson joined the staff of George Batten Company. A few years later he became Vice-president and General Manager.

In June, 1927, Mr. Dickinson retired, after fifteen years with the George Batten Company, to engage in writing and business consultation. He is the author of the *Primer of Promotion*, published in 1927.

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INTRODUCTION

THE questions, "Why is advertising?" and "What is it coming to?" are more intriguing than a rehashing of one's own blundering and once-in-a-while successful experiences, so I have given but few of mine.

The rapid development of advertising into a great industry (not, by the way, a science as yet nor anywhere near it) is much more interesting than any one man's part in it. Stories by advertising men about "Great Successes I Have Fostered" almost inevitably ring a false note and fail to show advertising in true perspective.

"The People" Make Success Possible

It is the public which has made these successes possible, though the advertising man who has followed a particular line of operative processes generally thinks he is the sole author of the law of industrial progress.

The biggest thing which the ablest advertising man may justly claim for himself is that he is a fairly successful opportunist, sensing some laws, of course,

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and possessing a good degree of operating skill. Even that is a very bold claim for the great majority of advertising men, for most of us have only drifted with the great tide of production and consumption, and at best have added only a few candle power units to the electrical energy of desire to buy and own.

Buying Is Changed to Borrowing

This desire has grown to such proportions that now we mostly borrow instead of owning. Borrowing is about the only way we can get possession of as many new things as we have been made to feel that we must have.

We go through the old forms of purchasing a house, a car, a radio set. In two or three years or more we trade it back at a heavy discount and buy a new model. We think about such articles in terms of temporary possession because we think so keenly about being up to date and always having new things. Of course it is splitting words, but a good deal of our buying is a loan disguised as ownership, exemplified perfectly in the great and growing habit of "owning" a coöperative apartment. Here the fiction of individual ownership satisfies the man who wants to feel more settled in his home than he thinks he can under

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a lease. Another way we borrow is by deferred payments.

Under the drive of an insatiable desire to have new things, the news values in advertising have been exploited to such an extent that we shout "news" about both old and new products. This Crying of Wares is Advertising's job.

§

Please do not look for too much continuity in the pages which follow. They are about advertising. Advertising reaches into the past and into the future not so much as a wide stream with well-defined banks, but more as the sticks of a Chinese fan or a still incompleated network of threads. So the chapters which follow should be taken individually, as following each a separate strand or fan stick, with the hope that at the end their union will make an intelligible pattern somewhat indicative of what advertising is coming to be because it must.

I believe that the ultimate end of evolution is so far away that we can't ever see it. We can see what has happened recently, and if we are more or less fatuous, as most of us are, the ultimate of blessing or disaster seems to be just around the corner. When we get around the corner we find more jobs to be

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done, but the ultimate crown of roses or of thorns is around still another corner. Our own times look like the ultimate period in history because we cannot see beyond them, but in a few years they will be past history. Very likely the ultimate end of evolution lies in the enjoyment of to-day's adventures.

A friend of mine read this book in manuscript. He was an unfriendly critic because he is one of the many who resent the fact and the power of advertising, although such people realize that, even so, they must use it.

Unfriendly Critics of Advertising

Such people see great wastage in advertising, and they see truly. They resent the arrogance of advertising; and to-day advertising is very arrogant. Arrogance succeeds best by disguising itself. The arrogance of advertising is very much like that of the politician who succeeds by making voters think his whole thought is in their interest.

Multiply the intelligent criticism of my friend many times, and advertising will not have such an easy task as it has had. When more individuals think a bit more resentfully of the way they are led by advertising, the advertiser will not be able to exercise his unconscious arrogance, as he is able now, by

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turning away from the critical comment of the intelligent individual and going after the crowd with reliance on his knowledge of the law of averages and of "mob psychology."

Now he can say, "Run away and don't bother me," to his dozen unfavorable critics if at the same time he can play the same old bally-hoo to catch the hundred who don't stop to philosophize about it. The advertiser is keen, as he should be, to push his business, and his arrogance is almost always unconscious.

Straight-line production, straight-line distribution, mass-retailing, mass-advertising, mass-financing, *will ultimately succeed only if they treat the individual better than he has ever been treated before*. In this respect the manufacturer, the public transportation company, the chain store, the department store, all have the same problem as the advertising man. It has become the problem of honest performance and speaking the truth.

Public Relations Are Private Relations

Public relations, differentiated, resolve themselves into individual and private relations. I am inclined to take issue with my critical friend only in that I see advertising engaged in the same process as every other industry, working out its destiny, doing many

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big and wise things and many foolish ones as well. I see it as an essential industry because it is the industry which provides the necessary messages of every industry.

Methods will change. As I am writing this sentence I am listening at my Long Island home to an Iowa rural assemblage singing about the tall corn and welcoming Herbert Hoover to the town of his birth. Methods have changed. Messages are spread to-day with a speed and comprehensiveness that was impossible to dream of a few years ago. Radio is one of our common tools.

Back in the Nineties

The advertiser of 1890 was not lured on by visions of "leadership," "dominance of his industry," "investment increment," "establishment of permanent good will," and all those wonderful things. These are some of the new glories of advertising. He was taking a chance on a scheme to help him sell more goods that year. His outlay was advertising expense to him, not advertising investment.

There was little system to it all. If he got hold of a clever writer, he got a clever advertisement. He was just trying to spread the news about his products. He did not see much to talk about except specifica-

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tions. If they could be checked up on easily, as in the case of a buggy or a bicycle, he was reasonably modest in his claims. If the check-up was not so easy to make, as in the case of a medicine, he recognized no limit or need of a limit to what he might claim, and some innocuous mixture became a sure cure for consumption or cancer. The advertising picture of 1890 showed some honest manufacturers trying to use for themselves the tool which so many fakirs were using at great profit.

We can see these oldtime advertisers trying to overcome the sales inertia of their day, and even a bit doubtful about the propriety of what they were doing. They were extremely doubtful about the dignity of what they were doing. There were no General Motors, American Telephone, or Standard Oil campaigns to give them confidence by their example. Besides that, a large proportion of the medical advertisers were plain liars. The advertisers of beer and spirits were being hounded from the pulpit and platform. The respectable advertisers were having hard work being respectable.

Has it become an "irresistible movement of business evolution"? Perhaps that is what advertising is, if you wish to use such a term. However, I believe I can only convert my critical friend from antagonism

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to friendly interest in advertising "Evolution" by showing him that it is the work of a lot of human beings trying to improve the technique of their necessary messages to those who might buy their wares, and that it needs his criticisms just as much as it does his purchases.

Is Business Business or Benevolence?

Let us be a bit careful about claiming pure beneficence for advertising. Its benefactions come, as most blessings do, from learning how to do hard work more skillfully so as to make a living and accumulate a surplus. Its greatest blessings seem to have come as by-products, a thing which often happens. A method of selling to-day's production to-morrow seems to have proven effective in making a business investment more valuable, as well as in directing the consumer's preference next year and the year after toward the advertiser as a preferred purveyor.

Perhaps the hardest thing advertisers have to learn even yet is the moral responsibility which goes with publicity. A business starts for the purpose of making money. Advertising brings the public to its support. It must pay for that support by giving the public a square deal. My friend would say that making the public pay too much for being advertised to is not a

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square deal. I hope, however, that he may see that a big campaign may be the most soundly economical.

Yes, my critical friend, arrogance, snobbishness, deceit, wastefulness, have come in along with respectability and power. The public will be fooled by some advertisers, by some politicians, by some clergymen, just as long as the public will accept bunk. The bunk acceptors are, I believe, a diminishing proportion of the public. My friend may not agree with me on this. I can't prove it, of course. Anyway, he should remember that, advertising is basically a necessary delivery of necessary messages, and ultimately its conspicuousness must contain its cure.

The different sticks in the fan, of this book, or the different strings, all, I hope, lead to what that last statement must mean, not in technique and method, because no one can predict the technique and method of ten years from now, but our technique and method will both be better if we understand more truly the spirit and motive which must be back of advertising if it is to thrive.

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CHAPTER I

Advertising Conditions and a Few Episodes of Twenty-odd Years Ago

LET me give the first lasting impression I ever had from an advertisement. When I was about nine years old I was fascinated by a poster advertising Elgin Polish. Elgin Polish was a waterproof preparation for giving a patent leather luster to shoes, and was made and bottled next door but one to my home. For about three months it looked like a world beater.

The poster must have been a good one, for I remember it yet. And I dare the brightest advertising artist in the United States to make anybody remember his stuff for more than forty years. Still, the 1928 advertising artist may take comfort in the fact that a year after that poster appeared no one could have found a bottle of Elgin Polish anywhere. Maybe the poster was better than the polish.

The poster showed a man whose shoes were polished with this magic juice, gloating in the midst

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of rain and slush because his feet were dry while others were catching cold from their wet feet. It was a work of art, and I'd give a good deal now to have a copy.

In 1904 I became an advertising representative of *Scribner's Magazine*. 1904 is very much more than twenty-four years ago as measured by the average changes of the average quarter century. The war came in between, and the great feats of motoring, aviation, radio, to say nothing of the new industrial development and the new conceptions of economics, hygiene and jazz. The advertising agencies I visited in 1904 and 1905 are, most of them, the same houses which Scribner's representatives visit now—but with what a difference!

The Agency in 1904

Remember, the advertising agent is the principal producer of advertisements. Most of the advertisements we read to-day were written and designed by an advertising agency. Most of the agencies twenty-five years ago were very loosely organized. The agency solicitor or representative was the all-important man. In most cases he worked on a commission and drawing account basis. His job was to get new business, and when he got it, to take care of it, in-

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spire its copy, often to write it, select the mediums to use, be interviewed by dozens of magazine and newspaper men, and find time to get more clients.

The usual agency commission, now 15%, was then 10%. It was often split even between the account representative and the agency. The agency head was himself a solicitor, and tried to make a profit both on his own billings and those of the men whose drawing accounts he was able to finance. Obviously if the solicitor was to do well financially, his accounts must be either large or many. There were very few large accounts in advertising then. Most of the larger ones were medical or proprietary. Even those were small compared with the great appropriations of these days.

Magazines in 1904

The leading magazines of that day were *Scribner's*, *Harper's*, *Century*, *Review of Reviews*, *Everybody's*, *Munsey's*, *McClure's*, and a few others. *Munsey's* development of the use of half-tone pictures of famous people gave that magazine about the first big circulation, and that was, I believe, less than half a million. In 1904 Lawson's sensational articles on Frenzied Finance put *Everybody's* into the lead for a while.

Rates in these magazines ranged from about \$200

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to \$500 per page, roughly a dollar per page per thousand. Just figure what a spread of pages an advertiser could buy for such a small sum as \$36,000 a year, a good-sized appropriation in 1904. An average rate of \$300 per page would mean \$1,800 for six full pages; then for the other six months, quarter pages would keep the name of the advertiser in sight for the sum of \$450, making a total of \$2,250 per magazine per year. Divide that into \$36,000, and the advertiser could have year-round representation in sixteen leading magazines and be one of the prominent national advertisers. To-day \$36,000 will hardly pay for the art and mechanical work alone on a great advertising appropriation.

In handling this sum of \$36,000 at 10%, the agency would have about \$3,600, and if there was an even split with the account representative, the latter would have \$1,800 for handling a "big account." If he were to become wealthy, as some did, he must have many accounts, for the majority would not run into so much money as \$36,000, or else he must find some way to get a higher percentage. One of the old ways to get a higher percentage was to buy space wholesale at a low rate from a publisher who needed ready cash, a secret transaction which the advertiser knew nothing about. To-day we would call that crooked.

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Gambling in Space

Remember that advertising was then very much in the speculative stage. The agent who had some money to gamble with in a job lot of space might cut quite a juicy melon later. The publisher saw profits to be made from selling advertising space way beyond any profits which the editorial excellence of his publication could be expected to bring. Publisher and agent were gambling on the advertiser's gambling, and naturally became co-workers on the job of getting more advertisers and getting them to advertise more. It is obvious that this fact of history explains the apparent anomaly of the advertising agent's compensation.

Many people have wondered and still wonder why the percentage rate of the agent's compensation for service to the advertiser is fixed by the publisher instead of by the man who hires him. The fact that publisher and agent are and always have been co-workers in increasing the quantity of advertising explains the origin of this custom. The fact that it works well, and most generally for the good of the advertiser, explains why the custom continues. Theoretically it is just as sound as an interest rate or a sales commission. Once fixed, it does not have to be argued every time a new contract is made.

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Advertising has proved to be even more valuable than its earlier promoters claimed it to be.

Very few agency men in those days dreamed of daring to ask their clients to spend more money; they just scrambled to get the handling of whatever sums the advertisers elected to spend. It was much later, when the agencies had learned to appreciate the possibilities of profit from larger expenditures to the advertiser himself, that agents ventured to offer advice as to the loosening of their clients' purse strings. The agent is no longer bashful about suggesting larger appropriations.

A Hectic Life

How did the representative with many accounts have time to make a real advertising man out of himself in his hurly-burly of getting new accounts, fighting for his selection of mediums, and studying trade conditions?

He spent his time feverishly, on sleepers, selling his services to new clients, consulting artists, often writing copy himself, inventing slogans, being interviewed by publication men, jumping from copy writing on tooth paste to a chase across the country to land a breakfast food account, working nights and Sundays for weeks at a time. This made strong men

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out of those who were able to survive, but many fell by the wayside. It was the method, however, by which most of our leading agents of more than ten years ago got their start. Financially it was the gambling era of advertising. With respect to service it was the day of the Jack-of-all-trades.

In 1904, if it was known that an advertiser had appropriated \$10,000 for national advertising, a procession of agency solicitors would call and urge their services upon him. Each figured this way: "Ten per cent. of \$10,000 is \$1,000; there ought to be several hundred dollars' profit in that, anyway, and maybe it will grow next year." The advertiser would feel that he was quite an important advertiser because so many agencies wanted his account.

To-day we can picture this ten-thousand-dollar spender going timidly into several big agencies, being looked over and gracefully but firmly turned down, because "the minimum of appropriation which we will undertake to handle is \$50,000," or whatever the sum may be. "You perhaps would better go to some small personal service agency, which operates with much lower overhead. As your business grows, you may want to come back to us later. At any rate, let us put you on the mailing list for our house organ and keep in touch with you." The modest and shrink-

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ing advertiser goes out, feeling rather small, and perhaps does hook up with some small agent whose business is done by one or two people and who is really concerned about earning the price of a pair of new socks for the baby.

Of course one thing which has put national advertising on a higher and more expensive plane has been the development of enormous periodical circulations, with their higher space rates and their successful efforts to sell space.

"Million," Once a Magic Word

Even in 1904 some advertisers had begun to put their appropriations into the growing women's magazines instead of into the so-called standard magazines, though they might be able to use only one or two publications for the money that would buy approved campaigns in ten or fifteen of the standards. I believe the *Ladies' Home Journal* was the first high grade magazine to reach a million circulation. For several years the exclusive campaigns in the *Ladies' Home Journal* and the *Delineator* were a thorn in the flesh of the standard magazine advertising managers. Then they learned to accept with what grace they might the fact that great units of circulation were easier to sell to the large advertiser than even the very select smaller units. Whether the large

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mass units represent equal or greater proportionate value is another thing. For several years a group of the fine old magazines have succeeded in presenting both quality and a large circulation unit through the "quality group." That successful combination finally split because some members of the group adopted a larger-sized page.

"Shall we take one magazine with a million circulation, or ten magazines with a hundred thousand each?" was a question that advertisers asked, and more and more of them felt the magic of the word million, a word which in late years has become commonplace. Another thing that helped the big circulation magazines was the revenue from their higher rates, by reason of which they could afford more intensive sales work on advertisers and agents.

To see how this great difference has come about, just remember the old \$100, \$200, and \$500 rates and consider the present single page rates of the early part of 1928, as cited below for a few magazines. These rates are for run of paper, black and white pages. Special position and color page rates run much higher.

Remembering that \$30,000 to \$50,000 was once a big magazine schedule, notice what a big magazine schedule would be to-day.

Here we have taken a few of the leaders, have not

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figured on every issue of all of them, have used some color, but mostly black and white.

Estimate an equal quantity of money or more for newspapers and other mediums.

This estimate would be in line (as far as money is concerned) with the needs and wishes of more than one 1928 advertiser. We have not in this list gone into the important fields of farm papers, straight fiction magazines, moving picture magazines, etc., all of which may be important under the conditions which face the sale of some types of products.

Saturday Evening

Post	52	pages black and white	@ \$8,000	\$416,000
Collier's Weekly	26	" " " "	@ 5,000	130,000
Literary Digest	26	" " " "	@ 4,000	104,000
Cosmopolitan	12	" " " "	@ 4,200	50,400
American	12	" " " "	@ 5,000	60,000
World's Work	12	" " " "	@ 700	8,400
Ladies' Home Journal	12	4-color pages	@ \$12,500	\$150,000
Woman's Home Companion	12	" " "	@ 11,200	134,400
McCall's Magazine	12	" " "	@ 10,600	127,200
Pictorial Review	12	" " "	@ 11,500	138,000
Delineator	* 6	" " "	@ 10,400	62,400
	† 6	" " "	@ 10,700	64,200
Review of Reviews	12	" " "	@ 1,300	15,600
Atlantic Monthly	12	" " "	@ 2,000	24,000
Scribner's	Sold in combination only for color (Quality Three)			
Harper's Magazine				
American Weekly	12	4-color pages	@ \$16,000	192,000

* Rate for first 6 months of 1929.

† Rate for second 6 months of 1929.

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Some of these rates may have been changed by the time this book is published. They are based on circulation and influence, and no one questions that they represent commensurate value. Space buying is done very shrewdly, and these publications all sell much space.

It is hard now to credit the report that the Curtis Publishing Company once contemplated changing the shape and size of the *Ladies' Home Journal* to that of *Harper's* and *Scribner's*. That was in the days when the standard magazines were the leaders in advertising volume.

The big "flat magazines" had other virtues to present than merely that of great circulation. Among them was the impressive large page, with its greater opportunity for art display, and the virtue of having your advertisement "next to reading" or on a full page opposite text. Many a time, as a standard magazine representative, I have met that argument with "a page is a page, whatever its size." I have also stated a belief that people preferred their advertisements segregated in an advertising section. So far as I know, these two disputes have never been officially settled. A magazine salesman is just automatically on the side of the question which the size of his page indicates. I have no doubt that several million dollars' worth of eloquence has been devoted

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to the great advantage of having your advertisement "next to reading matter," the very terminology of this argument implying that advertising is not reading matter.

Big space in publications taught us how to extend advertising accounts, to expand the \$10,000 and \$36,000 and \$50,000 campaigns till they run into the millions, and now even into the tens of millions.

Where did we learn all this? From Chicago, of course, that seething center of practical industrial education.

Stuffing the Golden Goose

William Boyd, Jr., has proven himself to be one of the ablest of modern promoters. At one time he was manager of the Chicago office of the Curtis Publishing Company, and that office built up a volume of advertising apparently all out of proportion to either the population or the relative industrial importance of the territory covered. Boyd was able to do it, first because he is a great promoter, and second because the automobile tire and accessory business had its home mostly in that territory.

Boyd believed that larger advertising would bring proportionately larger results, and made good on his belief when so many of his customers saw their busi-

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ness grow with unprecedented speed. Such a thing as fifty-two pages per year in the *Saturday Evening Post* at \$5,000 a page had never been heard of till some customer of the Chicago office of Curtis produced them. Some of these advertisers increased their weekly space to double page spreads at an even higher rate and seemed to make them pay even better. Big space in the *Saturday Evening Post* seemed so very effective that many foolish ones rushed to the conclusion that this great weekly constituted the only valuable medium there was.

Of course many of us gasped with horror, quoted the old scare phrase about having all your eggs in one basket, and prophesied dire wreckage from such speed. But wreckage didn't seem to follow. After a while we saw some of these big advertisers use other baskets as well, and as the years have gone by, the doctrine of high usable power produced by high speed in advertising has soaked through the whole advertising business. National advertisers practice it with enormous success, and where it has been applied locally by great city stores it has seemed to work in just the same way.

So the "economic" and "investment" era in advertising began. First the advertising salesman offered a good bally-hoo under whatever name he called it.

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The advertiser himself saw that sales were made more easily and in larger volume, and then began to learn that the limit of power in advertising is way beyond where he once thought it was. If advertising is economic and an investment, then it should be capable of intelligent budgeting. Now the advertising man talks as glibly of budgeting as he once did of half tones and line cuts.

The "Million" Became a Piker

Million-dollar appropriations no longer startle anyone. Why should they when we realize that a million dollars a year means *less than one cent a year per inhabitant of the United States?*

Appreciation of the high value of power is apt to come before a workable understanding of its control, so it is not surprising that there have been some wasteful and unprofitable big campaigns in advertising, just as there have been in the production of aeroplanes and radio sets.

The national weeklies and monthlies are not alone in having profited from the enormous increases in advertising revenue which have financed greater circulation building. The newspapers have been able to do the same, and to get a growing share of the great national advertising expenditures for themselves,

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also to build up newspaper circulations to totals which no one twenty years ago would have believed possible. These growing appropriations have also financed the advertising agencies, and have enabled them to develop an extended service which was not conceived of twenty years ago. It is hard to realize that all this advertising and merchandising development is only a "by-product of literature."

Where Is the Villain Hiding?

Still we hear the timid ones wondering what all this "extravagance" of advertising is leading to. If Boyd is to be credited with having pointed out the way to use speed and massed power in advertising, is he also to be branded as the villain who has demoralized the thrift habits of the nation?

The cost of all this machinery of sales and advertising must be added to the price of the goods. Who buys all this glorified merchandise? Can the buyer afford it? If we judge by the family income figures of government statistics, it looks as though people were spending their incomes a year or two in advance of the time they get their pay envelopes, and yet we find very few families going broke. The wholesale wreckage of family finance has always been predicted.

It has often been said that "the advertiser pays the

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freight" of all advertising costs. He does pay the bills of the agent, and through him those of the publisher, but if he pays the freight he collects it from the consumer. It is the consumer for whom all this big show is staged. And the consumer always pays the freight, which is the only way to have the freight paid.

Are we building up a false prosperity? Are we pyramiding our sales and purchases to a dangerous extent? Where is it all going to end? It is the opinion of this writer that it is not going to end, that we have only begun to comprehend the fruitfulness of nature, of labor, of physical power, and of brains when these are concentrated upon industrial enterprise. We are working out a true communism, not by bloodshed, but by industrial growth and consolidation. The great industrial enterprises, even now rarely dominated and less rarely owned by one man, are developing, through their own necessities, a broad policy of live and let live, of give and take, which was rare indeed twenty years ago.

Five per cent. on gilt edge bonds, six and seven per cent. on good stocks, seem to be almost agreed upon as capital's adequate share of the proceeds of great enterprises. (And of course there is the stock bonus.) With moderate surpluses for safety, the bal-

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ance of earnings can go into improvements, better compensation for better employees, and even to ultimate price reductions. It is up to the great corporations to see that this balance of earnings does not become a breeder of carelessness and inefficiency. That is always the danger. Carelessness and inefficiency are human traits, and an era of prosperity gives them a chance to show themselves. They are an inevitable though of course deplorable accompaniment of good times.

Industrial engineering now has its chance to earn rewards proportionate to its very great value. Internal good will, good will between stock holders, officers, management, labor, in any great enterprise may be just as important as good will with the public. Industries have an internal good-will problem as well as an external one. If advertising to the public comes before advertising to one's personnel, it is only because we must have sales in order to have a business.

The Conservation Stage Is Due

Perhaps advertising, having entered its first and second stages, is about to enter the "conservation" stage. One of the problems of an industrial house is going to be that of using some kind of internal ad-

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vertising for the education and benefit of its own people. Though this is obviously a delicate task, it is going to prove a necessary one and undoubtedly a very profitable one. The real figures for wastage caused by malalignment of people to their jobs would be appalling if they could be given. This is true even in the most modern plants which pride themselves on having highly engineered, straight-line production. It is notably true also of the work of sales and office detail organizations.

Becoming educated is an endless task. God help the man who thinks he has finished that job at the age of thirty or forty or fifty.

We have about decided that panics are unnecessary and wasteful, and have taken steps to prevent our having any more. Advertising is one of those steps. Improved banking is another. Industrial engineering is another.

As more of us recognize our individual selves as parts of the great industrial community, democracy will have the chance to prove the fine things which we know are inherent in it, and which ignorance and selfish political ambition have kept from fruition. Private ownership is often more keenly recognized as a public trust than public office is.

The more voters there are who understand the

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values in great enterprises, sure jobs for many people, and the mutuality of effort that ensures their continued prosperity, the easier it will be to curb over-production by conservation and to keep the industrial structure on an even keel, and the less chance there will be for that type of politician, editor or agitator who builds his own position on stimulating and enlarging discontent.

"Promotive" vs. "Economy" Dollars

There will always be much in the industrial picture which the timid man will fear, and which will cause him to urge economy and retrenchment, but there never yet was the same proportionate value in a hundred dollars' worth of economy that there is in a thousand dollars' worth of promotion. Promotion is the life blood of industry. The great enterprises are learning that they can make their thousand promotive dollars work effectively and at the same time save their hundred economy dollars. This, of course, is the ideal condition, but not the usual condition as yet. The lesson of making money comes before that of saving it. And the profit value of promotion compared with that of saving is more than ten to one.

The last twenty-five years have taught us much about how to make a profit from those thousand

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promotive dollars, and a little bit at least of how to save some of those economy dollars at the same time. Individuals are inclined to wobble toward one extreme or the other.

There is a new type of paternalism in industry, based on fraternalism. Care of personnel, improved working conditions, new kinds of workers' insurance, more intelligent wage scales, reasonable rewards for length of service, reasonable security of tenure in jobs well handled, all these paternalistic measures seem to be developing more wholesomely in corporation-owned enterprises than ever they could in individually owned enterprises where the boss plays the part of Lord Bountiful or the part of tyrant according to his individual fancy or temperament.

Before advertising had its chance to prove its possibilities in developing enormous growth, we had an era of "trust" formation, attempts to dominate an industry through a merger of its most powerful individual factors. The basis of this movement was to reduce sales and promotion costs through the elimination of competition. The newer basis is to gain promotive power through increased size and resources. Industry has become very much a matter of outlets.

Since the trusts have been "busted," some of their individual parts have, through advertising and

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modern sales methods, developed greater size than the whole combination had when it was formed.

Is Advertising a Burlesque?

It would be easy to write a pure burlesque on advertising, and on the ultra seriousness with which the advertising men take what they regard as their sacred calling, but it would not be a true picture. Hard work has made advertising so great that it is difficult to realize it. Just dig out some magazines of 1903 or 1904 and compare the advertisements with those you see in this month's monthly or this week's weekly. Only the publisher's own advertisements will look about the same.

The hard work which has done so much for advertising had to be done seriously. We are going to learn some time that labor and laughter are not enemies.

There is a remarkable burlesque on the advertising agency in Helen Woodward's fascinating book, *Through Many Windows*. It was quoted by Chase and Schlink in their book, *Your Money's Worth*. They seemed to take it very seriously. Mrs. Woodward's word picture obviously added much to the fear of these much "answered" gentlemen, fear lest a blind public was going to be shut up in a dark cellar, by the false brilliancy of the hypnotic quality

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of advertising. That metaphor is a trifle mixed, but it represents fairly well the general impression I obtained from reading *Your Money's Worth*.

Helen Woodward wrote a fascinating story of her advertising life. I recognize many of the pictures of people and events as both true and splendidly drawn, but I have been an advertising agent for many years and I don't recognize her picture of the agency.

"An advertising agency is a lively place. You pass so abruptly from non-skid tires to safety pins, from silk stockings to glass door knobs. You write one hour about a tree surgeon and the next about cog wheels. It is a place of swift movement—of constant shifts—of things finished at the last possible gasp—of seconds grabbed from eternity—of huge presses stopped to make a last minute change—of superhuman rush jobs—of hurrying and joshing and smoking and swearing. Something happens every minute—some triumph or disaster. There are no middle tones, for all is colored by the fury of creation.

"If you are advertising any product, never see the factory in which it is made. Don't know too much about it. Don't watch the people at work. Just know all you can about the finished article and the man who is going to buy it, and the conditions of selling

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in the business. Because, you see, when you know the truth about everything, the real inner truth, it is hard to write the surface stuff which sells it.

"Copywriters work with a sort of cynical passion. The glories of so many products are brought before them; they are asked to be enthusiastic to-day about this soap, to-morrow that talcum powder, next week some automobile. They are told:

" 'Write down and not up to your audience.

" 'No, this paragraph won't do—it's too logical. They don't buy that way.

" 'Make them cry.

" 'Make them mad.

" 'Make them jealous.

" 'Make them envious.

" 'Don't try to be funny.

" 'Don't try to be clever.' "

I have never been where I could see this picture even if I had keener eyes than I have. To me it is a charming piece of burlesque worthy to go on the burlesque stage. I thank Mrs. Woodward for the pleasure I got from reading this gem of writing, but even if I wanted to put advertising agents out of business by showing them up as hectic triflers, I should not think of quoting it as a true picture.

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Some Episodes of Other Days

It took a good many years to teach the publishers of high class publications to have a real respect for the money-producing pages of advertisements which they were glad to get, but the presence of which they deplored. One night I heard the late James Rodgers, for many years advertising manager of *Harper's*, summarize the condescension of the high class magazines in permitting advertising between their sacred covers. Speaking to advertisers, he said, "Gentlemen, please appreciate what we are doing for you when we permit you to hitch your freight cars to our Pullman trains."

In the early years of the century there was a good deal of "horse trading" in advertising. Now advertising is a cash commodity. Once a bicycle maker who sold his product to retail at a hundred dollars might trade a bicycle for a hundred dollars' worth of advertising. The publisher figured his card rates at a profit too, so each seemed to have a little advantage over the other. Manufacturer's cost of bicycle was forty dollars—with it he bought a hundred dollars' worth of space. Cost of publisher's space was forty dollars, for which he got a hundred dollars' worth of

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bicycle. Actually it was a forty dollar transaction instead of a hundred dollar one.

Hotels did a lot of this "horse trading" in advertising. So did steamship lines. It was easier to make a trade than a cash transaction with such advertisers. And small publishers found themselves loaded up with bicycles, farm implements, buggies, hotel scrip, and trips to Old Point Comfort instead of with cash.

Many of the knights of the grip sack who traveled to Boston representing periodicals had scrip at the Hotel Somerset, good for meals and rooms but not for liquors or tobacco. We all tried to use this scrip as luxuriously as possible on sumptuous food and commodious rooms for which our own pockets were not taxed a cent. Scrip to pay a board bill with is not so common now. Then we had our vacations on palatial steamers or at fine resort hotels, living on scrip instead of our own money.

When an agency man who had been rather curt or indifferent to us would suddenly change front and greet us affectionately, we suspected that he wanted a free passage to some vacation ground, and hotel accommodations after he got there. If our magazine had any such scrip we would try to make a horse trade, exchanging our scrip for the hope that he would give us a slice of his client's advertising.

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My first magazine trip to New England was a fairly lucky one. Shortly before that time, the advertising manager of Cabot's Shingle Stains had taken *Scribner's* off his list. Whether it was the pathetic and wistful appearance of *Scribner's* new advertising man I do not know, but I went back with an order for six quarter pages of Cabot advertising. I have always had an affection for Cabot's Shingle Stains, for oddly enough it was also the first account I got for *Good Housekeeping*. If I ever build a shingle house I certainly shall tint the shingles with Cabot's stains.

Once I was sent out to collect a bill from a nearly defunct agent who held one important account. I waited for hours until he had to see me, because I would not go until he did see me. He told me of the conspiracy of the magazines against him, and how Eugene Spaulding, advertising manager of Curtis, was after his life's blood. I kept bringing him back to the subject of the bill, which he seemed to want to avoid, and finally I gave the ultimatum: the check, or I would go to the client and ask for it, saying that the agent had refused to pay the client's legitimate bill. I got the check and was pleased to find that I could get it certified.

One day I called on the late J. Walter Thompson,

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founder and head of the advertising agency which bears his name. I did not know that he was deaf, and I had the humiliation of having him pick up the phone, call up Mr. Mix, my boss at *Scribner's*, and ask him what his young man wanted.

My eloquence persuaded the Scott's Electric Hair Brush people to try a quarter page in *Scribner's*. They wanted consumer inquiries at low cost and I never got another insertion.

Downtown one day I picked up some advertising from a saddle maker, and in talking to him I learned that he had made saddles for the Roosevelt family. I thought this fact would make good copy, so we put it in, and I had the proud job of writing the advertisement. After the magazine appeared, *Scribner's* got a letter from the secretary of President Roosevelt saying that the President objected to the use of his name or the names of members of his family in commercial advertisements, and "would we please avoid," and so forth. Charles Scribner's Sons were Roosevelt's publishers, and that episode added nothing at all to my glory with the house of Scribner. Few people ever realize, in looking at a magazine advertisement, how much exercise and hard brain work some young man has expended to get it in the magazine.

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Always the Fault of the Gun

I don't know whether the Colt's revolver made the cowboy famous or the cowboy made the Colt famous. I think it was mutual. At the Colt factory in Hartford I heard a piece of unforgettable philosophy. The case method was used, too. The gentleman at Colt's remarked that a marksman never blamed himself for missing, "it was always the fault of the G—— d—— gun." He handled his metaphor picturesquely as well as profanely, and showed how it applied to advertising, business, religion and politics.

While the advertising industry was being built up, the horse vehicle industry was being torn down. Those of us who are not in and of a business which must fall backward because of the march of progress, cannot realize the tragedy which such a movement brings to many good men. Ferdinand French of Boston, builder of fine carriages, saw his industry dissolving before his eyes and could do nothing to bring it back. One day, with complete disgust, he confessed that he had at last taken the agency for an automobile. Obviously, "people were going to buy the damn things anyway."

In my two years with *Scribner's* I learned a little

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about selling space, and at the end of the two years I was employed at an increase in salary as New England manager of *Good Housekeeping*. This manager title felt good, even though my own personal work was all I had to manage. *Good Housekeeping* then was a small but rapidly growing magazine published in Springfield, Mass. It had a higher rate than *Scribner's*, and particularly in New England was very popular with advertisers. So there was more money opportunity in my new job.

Crosby Spinney is now an able veteran on the Curtis staff. When a young man he worked with me both on *Scribner's* and *Good Housekeeping*. He was very full of Yale spirit and determination to succeed. One day he came in much excited over the prospects of a new account, a full page to be prepared by us, advertising a new silver device for squeezing a slice of lemon into iced tea. The inventor, a retail jeweler, had seen a "long-felt want" and was all ready to supply that want. In appearance his device was somewhat like a cross between a dentist's forceps and a pair of fire bellows made in silver. It would cost from ten to twenty dollars retail.

Spinney and I needed all the enthusiasm we could get, and *Good Housekeeping* needed all the pages we could get, but I couldn't see that as an advertis-

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ing possibility, and I told the inventor that while the device was sanitary I felt that there were still some things, such as squeezing lemon into tea, which people were willing to do in an unsanitary way. He thanked me and didn't order the page. This squeezer invention impressed me in about the same way as an invention of Jack Fairbanks, a *Good Housekeeping* circulation man with an inventive itch. Jack had the idea of fastening a strip of transparent celluloid with a rubber band to a half a grapefruit in such a way that the operator would see the excavation which his spoon was making and at the same time the errant juice would splash harmlessly against the celluloid instead of plunging viciously into the eye. It really happens sometimes that people expect to get rich on such things.

Spinney soon got even with me by showing that there was at least one advertiser whom he could handle successfully that I couldn't. There was a vacuum sweeper business in New England whose advertising man was a religious zealot and, I believe, a Harvard graduate, though that is not supposed to be a universal combination. One day I was trying to talk advertising with this man and found that we were discussing religion. He said that only God was good and man was utterly vile. I just couldn't keep

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my mouth shut or say "Yes, yes," as a good contact man should, but said something like this instead: "I think you show small respect for God when you rate His power of production so low that you condemn utterly what is reputed to be His chief product, man." That was no way to talk to an advertiser who was also a fanatic. I don't know how I got out of the place, but I do know that Spinney was able to keep the business in spite of what this gentleman thought of me.

The Lure of the Convention

I never could see why the people of a city are so keen to entertain a big convention. I suppose it is a type of mob enthusiasm which we are all naturally subject to, combined with the hope that many of the visitors will need new collars and shaving soap and thus enrich the city's merchants.

At any rate, Boston was entertaining the great national convention of advertising clubs. We had quite a highbrow club named the Pilgrim Publicity Association, although I doubt if the sponsors for the name realized that the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth. Because we were in Boston we fancied that we were a bit superior intellectually to the rank and file of shouting groups which sang songs about the tall corn,

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the watermelons, or the lovely climates of their states, and as self-acknowledged highbrows held aloof from joining this booster crowd.

I brought a tip from national headquarters that if Boston would come into the association we could have the convention the next year. And when you tell a man he can have a thing that somebody else wants, that thing immediately looks good even if it means the hard labor and sleepless nights involved in getting ready for a convention.

George Coleman, our president and spellbinder, who is now living a respectable life as president of the Babson Statistical Organization, and Henry Humphrey, chairman of our board, were opposed to our joining the Association of Advertising Clubs. So we sent them both west to the convention in Omaha and gave them the power to add the dignity of the Pilgrims to the Association's club roll if they should find the Southerners, Westerners, Northwesterners and Southwesterners fit to be associated with. In addition they were empowered to ask for the convention for the next year if they should see fit, as of course they would.

The train they went on was planted with enthusiastic salesmen, and they were sold before they got as far west as Chicago. They also brought the conven-

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tion back to Boston the next year, which presented, among other things, the unique sight of hundreds of people eating Southern watermelons on the sacred precincts of Copley Square and dropping the rinds upon that sanctified sod. During the convention, which was the only one I ever attended or ever expect to attend, I had the job of looking after everything that everyone else forgot. There was plenty to do. Indeed I was so busy shouting that I lost my voice.

We got still another by-product of joining the Association in the election of Coleman as president. After the somewhat stormy election, George and I were talking with a man from the West—or they were talking and I was whispering. George slapped me on the back and said, "Here is the man who is really responsible for this convention, the man who really did it." My whispered reply was, "That is true. You hear it from the great George Coleman himself. It is also consistent with life, for here is George, carried on the shoulders of an admiring crowd, and here I am hiding around a corner with a frog in my throat."

In the two years with *Scribner's* and the five years with *Good Housekeeping* my energies were of course devoted to the sale of space. Personally I had become

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keen to get into the production and service side of advertising, which of course meant joining an advertising agency.

When I entered the New England Office of George Batten Company my problems became different. These problems were first to secure clients, and second to see that good advertising was prepared for those clients and placed in the right mediums.

Any advertising agency representative can get clients. There are many people who want to advertise. The problem of the agency representative always has been to get clients whose advertising could show a profit to the advertising agency and whose advertising could continue and grow because it showed a profit to the advertiser. I suppose that the majority of advertising agency men have had to go through a number of failures from time to time. We like to forget such things, though there is value in bringing them into the light and looking them over. It is by such experiences that the advertising man learns what to undertake and what to leave alone, not always an easy thing.

There are plenty of advertisers who want agency help. Some of them should be let alone, as will be seen by the account of the four flivvers in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

Four Flivvers and Some Other Failures

THERE was a real idea back of each of the four attempts to make an advertising account, though there was not the real making of a consistent advertiser in any of them. One needs to know where advertising can and should lead him to be a consistent advertiser. The ambitious agency representative without any business is very likely to see possibilities of good business in any decent firm which is willing to spend a little money.

Flivver No. 1. "The Town of Tumbling Water"

An Age of Slogans

Some friends told this agency representative with nothing as yet to represent that the town of Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts, was about to advertise its water power and its fine location for factory sites, and that Dickinson might land it for his first client. This was interesting because Dickinson's mother had once lived in Shelburne Falls, and there his father and mother first met. I remembered the beautiful falls,

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the water tumbling over the rocks, and before I arrived there had a slogan all ready—"The Town of Tumbling Water," alliterative, descriptive, and easy to remember.

That was a slogan age. Johns had devised the famous "Hammer the Hammer" for Iver Johnson, and Frank Finney had won the competition for the Underwood Ham business by producing a similar one, "Taste the Taste." Finney, with the help of Barrett Andrews, then of Butterick, had inked this slogan, "Taste the Taste," on innumerable post cards of buildings, bridges, etc., in and around Boston, and sent them by mail in a steady stream to the Underwood office, thus apparently sweeping the Underwoods off their feet and outdistancing the competition of those agencies which were merely telling Mr. Underwood and Mr. Nash how sane and solvent they were and how well they served their clients.

This had been impressed upon my mind as a successful performance, and I had my slogan ready. I had seen, too, that both the Iver Johnson and Underwood accounts were brilliantly handled and successful. When I arrived at Shelburne Falls to meet the committee of the Board of Trade I was a bit upset to find only dry rocks and no water tumbling over them because it was all being led away to turn turbine and dynamo wheels and make electricity. The

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committee assured me, however, that the slogan was fine, and appropriate, really, because when there was more water than the power sluices could carry, the water did tumble over the rocks, and anyway it tumbled down the sluices to the turbines.

Another thing didn't seem quite right. The water power from Shelburne Falls all belonged to a company which was conducting it to a more distant point, and Shelburne Falls village itself got its light and power from Turner's Falls, or somewhere else. These trifling difficulties did not dampen the ardor either of the committee or their advertising agency man, and some "Town of Tumbling Water" advertising made an appearance among the municipal and community advertisements in *World's Work*. Of course it did not last long. The small commissions did not pay the agency expenses of handling, and the account became a small waterfall of red ink in the Batten accounting room. Whether the advertising brought any factories to Shelburne Falls I do not know, but no phenomenal increase in population in that delightful village has ever been brought to my attention.

Municipal Advertising

When a municipality or a state or a community appropriates a sum of money for advertising, it is

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very easy for the agent to revert to the old *Caveat emptor* idea which he likes to think he is superior to.

We will say that our city council has been egged on to appropriate money for advertising by the Chamber of Commerce or the combined booster clubs such as Kiwanis, Rotary, Advertising, Real Estate, or whatever organizations have assumed the burden of making our glorious city most gloriously known to the world as the world's most glorious place in which to live and produce. The city council has appropriated \$50,000 for an advertising campaign. At 15 per cent. there is \$7,500 of gross income to the agency.

The probability is that this will be only a spasm of advertising, but some one has got to write and place it. It will cost the city more to do it without an agent, for the city will pay gross rates anyway, and without an agency, copy, art and placing will cost extra. The agent who succeeds in landing the business will do his work conscientiously, but if he is a practical man he knows that \$50,000, which isolated looks like a considerable chunk of money, will go a very short way in getting the United States excited over the glorious opportunities to live and love and earn wealth in our glorious city; that it will cause few if any to pull up the stakes of their homes and jobs in some other equally glorious city and move to the city advertised.

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If the chairman of the advertising committee of the city council has a friend in the agency business, it will be easy to guess who will get the account. If not, he will have an interesting time talking to agents and learning what wonderful organizations and what brilliant men they offer for his service. The agent who lands the business is very apt to look on it as a windfall rather than a serious job which he can hope to make pay a profit to his client. There are real economic jobs to be done by cities and communities through advertising, but it is not economic to plan the sort of campaign just outlined without an understanding of its magnitude, and without the insurance of money enough to keep it going.

All this is why the "Town of Tumbling Water" is a confession of failure. Some agents will neither seek such business, whatever the appropriation, nor accept it when offered, except as they insist that the municipality shall know just what it wants accomplished and that there shall be a reasonable chance of the objective being attained.

Flivver No. 2. "Saveg"

Flivver No. 2 was quite different. It was a food product, of potentially great distribution and sale.

Some people connected with the offices of the Bos-

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ton and Maine Railroad in Boston had a formula for a mixture which would do much if not all of the job which eggs do in cooking; an egg substitute, in fact, though we always fought shy of the word substitute, even in talking among ourselves. A substitute is a poor thing to advertise except in war time, and sometimes even then.

It was a good product. A man of means had put \$5,000 into it and was supposed to be ready with more money if the product could be made to move. We talked and talked. We had lengthy and serious discussions as to an appropriate name. We argued that this was an egg saver, that its destiny was to provide more eggs for omelets, ham and eggs, egg nogs, and all by using fewer eggs in custards, cakes, and so on. Not a substitute, but a saver.

A "Coined" Name

And so the parent of Tumbling Water produced the magic name Saveg. By leaving off the other "g" we could copyright the name without trying to copyright the English language. Not everybody liked the name, but we discussed it so much that we all got used to it, and the art department of the agency produced a decent carton design on which the name really looked quite well.

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Some goods were produced, in somebody's kitchen or barn or somewhere. They were packaged and labeled, and the agency man took the train for New Bedford. We were after the United States, one town at a time, and New Bedford was chosen for a starter.

We saw Ernest Alley, then advertising manager of the New Bedford *Standard* and *Mercury*, and of course we advertised in the *Standard* and in the *Mercury*, and through the help of those most excellent papers we secured the services of an energetic jobber who put Saveg into a majority of the grocery stores in town. Our jobber was energetic but he wasn't the leading jobber; the leading jobber refused to touch the thing except as he should receive actual orders from his trade.

We had just money enough for a few weeks' advertising, and when it was used up, some goods had been sold but not enough to pay a profit or even to give promise of a profit soon. The money was used up—the "angel" was not offering more—and Saveg started to die before anyone realized it was really born. A good idea, at least a reasonably sound plan for executing the idea, but no adequate preparation to weather any storms. We finance our children through infancy, through youth, through illness, through schooling, and more or less into maturity

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before we expect them to produce, and the parallel with such things as Saveg is perfect.

After Saveg had been buried about a year as an advertising account, the writer met an advertising agent from London and asked him what was the largest English advertiser. His answer was, "Bird's Custard Powder, a substitute for eggs." On a trip to Europe in 1927 I found that it is still one of the leading advertisers in the British Isles.

Our product was worthy of a good attempt to establish it, the method of opening up one market at a time was sound; but the business did not have enough working capital to stand a period of promotion at a loss, and the personnel of management and control was not right. These were good fellows but they were railroad freight office men, not merchants nor manufacturers nor financiers.

Flivver No. 3. A Water Bottle

M. H. P. Aluminum Hot Water Bottle was successful, but not a success as an advertising account.

A lady of means in Providence was advised by a physician to try invention as a remedy or antidote for a nervous condition. She was of an inventive turn and produced a hot water bottle of aluminum, with many points of great excellence. I never met the

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lady, but I did meet a very nice young man named Fanning who had secured the sales rights for the water bottle. Arrangement had been made with an aluminum company to manufacture the bottle at a price to be fixed to some extent by volume, as I recollect it.

Here was an advertising account reduced to its lowest terms—a product, production, a sales organization to handle it, and money to advertise it, as much money as Mr. Fanning could persuade the lady to spend. An appropriation of about \$10,000 was made, and this money was to help in distribution as well as in sale.

The *Literary Digest* offered the services of its special sheet issued to druggists, which would reproduce the page advertisement from the *Digest* and another special page giving an attractive introductory offer to druggists. So we used the *Literary Digest* and some space in another magazine or two. We provided a follow-up record and a form letter system for Fanning. We offered the bottle for sale by mail, “if your dealer hasn’t it in stock,” and we wrote to the drug trade, giving a very attractive introductory offer. A competing water bottle at this time gave a five-year guarantee, and we went them one better with a ten-year guarantee.

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At the end of a year the bottle was stocked to some extent in every state of the union. A good many thousands had been sold, and more might have been sold if the manufacturing company had produced the goods as fast as they were needed.

A business had been established, its owner had more than her total investment back, either in money or inventory, and had already earned a considerable investment in good will. It was reported that her financial advisers, who had pooh-poohed the idea of her going into business, now wanted to buy a share of it. The thing was a success.

It grew the second year, but the owner had had her fun from it. She had proved that she could make money, and when the aluminum company which manufactured the bottle offered her what looked like a very fine price, she sold, getting back all her money and a very attractive profit. Her advertising agent thought, however, that she sold for about a third or fourth of what the business was worth, but he had no opportunity to meet her and tell her so.

A flivver, yes, but the kind of experience which is priceless in teaching how to build a sales business, step by step, when the product is right and money for development is at hand.

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Flivver No. 4. A Crochet Cotton

The fourth flivver was also a success, but its owners didn't know it, at least till much later.

A group of men in the cotton yarn business invested a few thousand dollars apiece in a company to convert and sell mercerized crochet cotton. Through their mill connections they were able to buy fine crochet yarn on credit, and a small plant for winding, labeling and packing was established, and a man found to run it. The sum of \$15,000 for advertising in women's magazines was appropriated but not all spent.

D. M. C., an imported mercerized cotton, dominated the market at the time, and we went into competition with it. We had a salesman. We prepared a new and efficient card system for recording inquiries and sales. We had some splendid crochet designs made up and pictured on paper with complete instructions for working. *Modern Priscilla* was glad to give us its efficient help in this, and we put some attractive advertisements in women's magazines, with an offer of these introduction sheets free by mail to such as would inquire. We had many inquiries coming in at considerably less than a dollar an inquiry, figuring on the basis of the total number

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of inquiries divided into the sum of money expended in advertising.

Spanked By a Yankee Financier

At the end of the year the agency man was brought on the carpet by one of the stockholders, a prominent and wealthy New Englander, and a dialogue ensued something like this, only longer:

Stockholder: I want to see what you have to say about the money we have sunk in advertising.

Agent: Sunk? What do you mean by sunk?

Stockholder: Well, we started with so much money and it is all gone, and I don't see that we have got anything for it.

Agent: Let me tell you what you have got. You have got a business well started.

Stockholder: But that isn't money.

Agent: It is worth money.

Stockholder: I don't see how you figure that out. We had the money, and now we haven't got it.

Agent: You have a list of over 15,000 names of women who have shown interest in your product. Many of them have purchased by mail.

Stockholder: What is that list of names worth?

Agent: Easily \$20,000, at a conservative estimate, considering its quality, its liveliness, and the use to

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which it is being put in interesting dealers. Then you have several thousand dollars' worth of converted stock, inventory ready to sell. You have so many hundred dealers carrying your goods and well satisfied with their quality and saleability, also such and such a number of jobbers, with the lists of jobbers and dealers growing rapidly. Here again you have from five to ten thousand dollars of actual value in producing good will. In a word, you have in actual value for a going and growing business considerably more than double the amount of money which you put in and which you say is gone.

Stockholder: That all sounds very well from someone who wants to continue to spend our money, but I don't see it.

Agent: Please see it. You have a real business under way. It only needs to be financed a little further, to be managed a little better, as it easily can be, to grow into a big thing.

Stockholder: I can't see it.

And he couldn't, and that was the end of that account for the agent.

But that little business couldn't stop. Its product was fine, and later some big and profitable contracts were made with a large retail distributor, though the growing good will of the trade name was lost, as the

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retailer's own name went on the product. The plant was enlarged. The World War put D. M. C. out of business temporarily.

More than two years after the first advertising had stopped, the manager of the mill told me, "Without any advertising or solicitation we are making over fifty dollars a week net profit on the orders by mail which still come in from the original card list of customers who wrote in to us that first year." So the original advertising was all practically paid for in that way.

A beautiful business was being prepared for the hands of these gentlemen, but they could not see it. Why? Because a business with retail stores and lists of customers was very much out of their line. They were mill men. When they sold, they sold not at a big profit by the gross or the dozen, but at a small percentage profit by the train load or the year's output of a big mill.

The consumer was a stranger to these men. They were fine, upstanding Yankee citizens of the old textile school. They had flirted with an adventurous idea in this little converting mill, but the adventure threatened to carry them too far. They got lost in uncharted seas. They didn't know the way through. In spite of themselves the wind carried them into

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some pretty good sailing, if I am correctly informed, but they might to-day have been the owners of a steadily growing business with a brand worth millions.

Wastage in Advertising

Talk about wastage in advertising! It is insignificant compared with the wastage in genuine opportunity caused by timidity and ignorance, insignificant compared with the wastage due to inadequate financing where adequate financing could easily be secured if reasonable faith were back of the effort to secure it. If these Yankee gentlemen had been possessed of just a little of the buying and selling instinct which seems to come to a Hebrew, at his birth, Batten's would probably have to this day a mercerized cotton account of at least a quarter of a million dollars a year unless some other good agent had taken it away in the meantime.

No College Teaches These Things

Flivvers 1—2—3—4. These are the things which can't be learned in university courses in advertising. These are the things which help a man to distinguish between the substance and the shadow, to learn to recognize and welcome a sound piece of business

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when it comes and to have at least the rudiments of the knowledge of how to handle it well.

The Big Agency and the Small Account

In addition to the four flivvers just described, there were some other raps which tried to pound cold facts into me.

A gentleman by name of Stephenson made underground garbage receivers in Lynn, Mass. I like a fine piece of mechanical work, so the receivers appealed to me as good products and a New England magazine representative helped me to get Stephenson's advertising, telling him that he might as well have the services of an expert agency without extra cost. He had been placing his advertising direct.

Stephenson is a fine fellow and always made a superior product, but he seemed satisfied to make only as much product as he could himself retail by mail and otherwise. That fact should have warned me that his account was no place for me as a salaried representative of a great firm which naturally expected to make a profit on its men. It took my stubborn mind a year or two to discover that a commission of a few hundred dollars a year could not be expected to pay several thousand dollars of salary

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and expense and make a profit, and that this account could not be expected to grow.

I tried hard to persuade Stephenson to put his product into the hands of dealers. He wanted to, but it was a fine and expensive article and could not be expected to move fast in a store. Somehow we never could work out a plan of dealer distribution that appealed both to him and to the dealer. Stephenson did not quite want to let go of the product when the dealer took it. He felt that it might not be treated right if it was just another item of stock, that it might not be demonstrated properly, and that the dealer should be his agent and learn to sell the goods as an agent, rather than as a dealer. The dealer had problems of his own and couldn't see any great profit in adding such another one, so very little happened in the way of dealer distribution.

Stephenson was a careful man and very much of a manufacturing idealist. He felt that his underground receiver and his reënforced ash cans were so fine that his market must be limited to the owners of nice homes, the country life class and the well-to-do suburban dwellers. He was more particular about making his product well than he was about low manufacturing costs. He wanted small space in a few

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high class magazines, and he wanted his advertising to be handled with the same care and idealism which he put into his manufacturing.

I was ambitious to improve Stephenson's advertising, and after many brain storms I suggested a slight change in the form of the advertisements, an arrangement of zigzag lines which I felt was an eye-catcher. I doubt if it was any improvement, but I fancied I was giving a little more optical insistence, whatever I thought that meant. I wanted to revolutionize something, but my client did not need nor could he use a revolution. The business had no chance to become a big business.

Finally I saw that as a decent man I should retire from the job and let Stephenson go his own individualistic way in peace. I also saw that there wasn't a Chinaman's chance of my ever doing what the advertiser wanted done, of giving him the amount of time for consultation which he liked and of earning half enough to pay expenses, and so I kicked myself out. I did it by letter. I liked Stephenson so much that I hadn't the heart to do it any other way. All this time I had felt like a horse confined in a small paddock when he wanted to get out and run a race, and still I knew that my client was not to blame for having a business which gave me small scope.

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Beating the Bushes for Game

About this time Sturgiss, one of my side partners in our Boston office, and I, in our zeal after business for Batten's went plunging after every idea for advertising which stuck its head up. We found product after product which could be advertised as soon as the money could be raised, or advertised right away if the agency would hold back its bills until the business began to pay. At Providence we found an automobile tire, new process and all, and we got excited over that but it never came through. We found salad dressings, condiments, noodles, and just after electric lighting for automobiles came in we found the finest acetylene lamp ever devised for automobiles. While we were discussing it, it died. It was born too late. Electric lighting for automobiles had been born.

We got all excited over a felt tire which was to do away with punctures, but it didn't work very well, and detachable rims and wheels made punctures less important anyway.

Any advertising man will get excited over salad dressings and noodles, because food products can carry large appropriations if they can be made to sell well; but these food prospects of ours were all duds.

I remember that after a long time the futility of

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chasing these things struck us and we argued it out. "Remember that some of the big Batten accounts started small. Look at Pompeian and Prophylactic." "Yes, but Batten's itself was small, and small accounts were all it could get at first. On the other hand, remember that the graveyard of our agency and of any other is filled almost entirely with accounts which were small and not financed sufficiently to carry them through the critical period of advertising. Such accounts die. Big and well-financed advertising appropriations may leave one agency, but they go to another; they don't stop advertising."

Pioneering, Often Costly

I am not sure that an enthusiastic advertising man ever quite learns the difficulties of an account which advertises for the first time. We think of the beginnings of Ford, of Gillette, of U. S. Tires, of Shredded Wheat, and how wonderful it is to get in at the start and help in the pioneering stage of such a business, forgetting that in many successful businesses the people who were in at the start dropped their cash and their time and never got anything back. Every agency which can afford it should do some of this sort of pioneering for the good of its soul, just as a big publishing house sometimes pub-

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lishes a book whose probability of profitable sale may be very doubtful.

To insure agency profits, advertising men must know not only that the article to be advertised has merit in itself, but that the men behind it are competent to go through the hard work of getting it started right and can command money enough to do the job. What seems to be enough is often far too little.

If the wastage of even ten years of promoting things which cannot succeed or do not succeed could be computed, its total would be staggering. Because the phonograph and dictaphone succeeded, the telegraphone surely would—but where are the many thousands of dollars which went into that? These tires—these soups—these condiments—these novel-ties—each one had the enthusiasm of an inventor behind it, the zeal of a promoter, and a lot of capital from the inventor and his friends, but they represented in the end nothing but wasted time, money and labor.

Advertising Needs Plenty of Money

A young engineer, specializing on small marine engines, produced a new type of two-cycle engine. It seemed excellent to my inexperienced eye, and we did a little advertising for it in yachting papers. This

fine young man simply tore himself to pieces over this invention and over another idea of his to make an automobile simpler and cheaper than a Ford. It was a real tragedy. Money ran out and the inventor tried to get the thing going by working day and night, but the business just didn't go. However, the young man's health did go. I tried again and again to get the answer; the engine seemed to be very fine. Was it too late, like the splendid acetylene lamp? That might be, as this invention came just at the time when the four-cycle engine was pushing the two-cycle out of its old dominance in small and large power craft.

I imagine every advertising man runs across dozens if not hundreds of these brilliant ideas which never come through to the fruition of a profitable business. I don't know how many of these prospects I have thrown cold water upon, advising that the enthusiast keep his money at least until it has been proven in the open market that a reasonable number of people will want the child of his brain and enthusiasm.

Way back in the *Scribner* days more than twenty years ago I received an order for advertising a new copying machine. The advertiser told me that the machine was not quite ready but it would be before

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the advertisement came out. I advised him to wait until it was out and tested. So far as I know he is waiting yet. I do know that eight months after this order was given and returned the gentleman thanked me for saving his money and for keeping him from a premature announcement of an article not yet perfected for the market.

Of course, among the businesses which business brokers have to dispose of, there are some good ones which might be salvaged, but many of them have failed because they should fail. Businesses for sale are on the market for various reasons. Sometimes a man wishes to retire on account of his health or his age. Sometimes the business seems to need new blood or capital, very often because more courage than brains have been used to start a thing which cannot go, since it is written in the book of fate that it shall cost more money to make and promote that article than ever can be returned from its sale.

One of the illusions which millions have accepted as truth is that *anything* can be sold by advertising.

"We have almost put this over; a little more money and we'll be out of red ink into black." Once in a while that is true, but often the most profitable thing to do is to let it die, particularly if the only financial food to be had must come in small bites.

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My most distressful hours as an advertising agent have been when I have been trying to help a client get from red ink into black with small dribblets of promotion money. I have done altogether too much of it in my time, and am sorry to say that my wish to give encouragement may sometimes have been expensive to the man I have encouraged.

The advertising man looking for a client wants to see a growing business, with money enough to promote it and men behind it who are both intelligent and game. He learns that it is very hard for a game man ever to admit that a case is hopeless and to save himself for a winning battle by giving up a losing one.

CHAPTER III

My Respects to the Advertising Manager

AS advertising has grown, so has developed an occupation whose personnel usually carry the title of advertising manager. The job behind this title is an important one to advertising.

The advertising manager is the one man in the business organization of an advertiser whose function it is to see that his firm's message to the public is presented adequately and brilliantly. He should be, and sometimes is, a man of high mental caliber and business skill.

A Fine Sample

I happened to know a good deal about one such man whom I would call by name if I did not fear it would embarrass him—he is quite modest, with all his ability. He is advertising manager for a great house which manufactures floor coverings, and with him is associated an especially competent director of sales. To-day there are many good advertising managers. Twenty years ago there were relatively few

good ones and relatively many wretchedly incompetent ones.

This man, whom I will call Connor because that is not his name, has found that his most efficient way to secure consistent advertising is to coöperate wholeheartedly with his advertising agents and to get them to coöperate equally with him. Such relationships may be simple, natural and efficient. In his home office this advertising manager is head of a large department, for there are many ramifications to the advertising of floor coverings, many things which the manufacturer's own organization can do best for itself. This man also works closely with his advertising agency, helps the agency with information, checks and corrects their information about floor covering, stimulates their work on copy and art, keeps them informed as to how the advertising has worked and is working. Above all he makes them understand that he not only expects good copy and wise selection of mediums, but will know and appreciate these things when he gets them. He stimulates the interest of the agency in working for his firm, and acts as a balance wheel in regulating the natural exaggeration of that enthusiasm which writers are disposed to express.

He knows his job, he understands the agency job,

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and he proposes that his firm and its agency shall work together for the best possible advertising. Above all things he recognizes the value of a permanent policy and its progressive fulfillment. From all this it may be seen that Connor possesses to a notable degree the essential qualifications of both the editor and the promotor, a combination essential in a good advertising manager.

Agency contact with such a man is almost sure to produce satisfactory advertising. A good advertising manager is priceless, because the point of view of the advertiser must be presented clearly and sensibly to those who make the advertisements if good copy is to result.

I know other advertising managers whose attitude toward their agency is principally one of jealousy. They are jealous of the agency's ability to produce copy. They show that jealousy in criticism, endless revisions of copy which do not improve it, petty personal criticism, things that are bound to make agency work ineffective. An advertising manager who fancies his own ability as a copy writer and can't see the ability of the agency copy men, is a constant source of foolish trouble to the agency.

There are more men of the Connor sort than there were, but sometimes the holding of an official title

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seems to breed a desire to make as many people as possible bow down to that title rather than to saw more wood and saw it better.

Some Are Not So Good

The evolution of the high type of advertising manager has been a hard one and a very interesting one. These men have had to work out their own careers and formulate their own jobs, for it has been impossible in the past to standardize their functions, and almost as impossible for other people to see the importance of their jobs.

Originally the heads of the firms which employed them had little knowledge of what these men could and should do. There existed only the general notion that where there was advertising there should be advertising managers. If we go back to 1904 we cannot forget that many of the advertising managers were sorry specimens indeed, with all the prospects in the world of getting worse. Many things were conspiring to spoil them.

Here is the kind of chap we often found in the old days when we called on an advertising manager.

Picture to yourself a man who is not snappy enough to be a salesman, not accurate enough to be an accountant, not careful enough to run a lathe, but

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in his own mind is an authority on advertising, and you see the type of advertising manager which was once all too common. It is too bad, but there are some of them left yet.

Manufacturers often feel their need for advertising in a very vague way. They know nothing about advertising, they are loath to trust anybody about advertising; they know only that they must have advertising, and they want to see that the control of it does not get out of their own hands. They do not want to pay large salaries for a job they don't understand. With such a manufacturer the type of man described above has a good chance to land the job of advertising manager. He may have had some advertising lessons in a night school course or he may not. Often he has failed at other jobs. Here, if he has nothing particular to do except to strut or look wise, he may not fail. It is surprising how long some of these chaps get away with strutting and looking wise.

To the magazine or newspaper representative the advertising manager, good or bad, is the incarnation of fate. He often can make or break the advertising representative. In the old days, as I met him on my rounds of magazine solicitation, I found that he was different from the agency man. One got used to the personalities of the Boston agents; to having Mr.

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Walter C. Lewis in his gentlemanly way say that there would or would not be any pages of Lowney advertising, or wondering if Ed Gould's latest prediction about Gillette was going to come true, or trying to guess what was back of Shumway's wise look when he spoke guardedly about Pacific Mills.

We knew how to take the remarks of Allen Wood, Major O'Keefe, Jim Wetherald, Al Ellis, Perry Walton and Ed Kollock. We even knew that we were not in serious disfavor when Cowen twisted and untwisted wire clips and threw dozens of these little shiny wrecks into the waste basket. We knew the agency men pretty well. But the feelings of the advertising manager toward us and what we represented were more carefully concealed. He often was more of a bluffer. Some of the advertising managers had been sitting in their exalted seats a very short time. How could we cultivate them? Did they like to eat? Did they like this or that? How could we give them a good time without cost to themselves?

The advertising manager loomed big in our lives. We could not curse him if we wanted to, he might be a buyer of our space; so we spoiled him most shamelessly, as salesmen have always tried to spoil buyers by making love to their stomachs and their foibles.

The worst thing that happens to an advertising

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manager is that he almost never hears any of the unfavorable things that others say of him and his ability.

Spoiled by Sugar and Kisses

The advertising manager is always wooed, never criticized, by his callers. All of the salesmen who call on him treat him with friendly dignity or with fear-some respect, because he represents an appropriation of money. An impersonation of money to be spent is always treated with respect. Most of us get a reminder of unpleasant realities now and then. The agency man gets it from his client. The advertising manager rarely gets it even in his own firm, because there he is heading a department whose function and operation are Greek to the accountants, the office manager, and most of the executives. They know too little about what the advertising manager should do to be able to criticize what he does do.

Often the advertising manager is the recipient of bountiful entertainment which seems to cost nothing to anyone because it is paid out of the liberal expense accounts of the opulent publisher or the zealous agent. This entertainment may not bring business, but it is supposed at least to keep the advertising manager in good humor with his entertainers, the

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theory being that though he may not do business with you now, he may sometime if he likes you.

I have heard of one representative of a publication who turned in a personal entertainment expense of between seventy and eighty thousand dollars a year. He must have been very kind to the advertising managers. "If a good customer wants an automobile, buy it for him and charge it to the house." The publication expense account has to be even fatter than that of the agency, for the publisher often feeds both agent and advertising manager, and his customers may be all the clients of all the agencies.

An advertising manager cannot permit all this entertaining to influence his judgment. We didn't exactly expect these things to influence him, but we hoped they would, and sometimes we felt they did. It is easy to favor a boon companion.

I used to wonder how any advertising manager ever got time to work. My call would be preceded more often than not by that of another magazine man and would be followed by more. Often there would be several of us waiting in the anteroom. We learned who the long-winded representatives were, and when we saw one of them in the anteroom ahead of us, we got out and called again.

Most business houses of all sorts insist that cour-

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tesy shall be shown to all callers, though in former days there was frequently a sign like this placed in the reception room:

	Our Advertising Is Placed By Blank, Blank and Blank We Refer All Advertising Matters to Them	
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One just had to learn to disregard that sign, as well as the still older sign banning "Peddlers, Solicitors, and Advertising Men." One advertising manager I knew when I was trying to sell *Scribner's* space hinted to me that he was trying to collect a library of modern fiction without expense. When I learned that I hunted up some damaged books at the office and gave them to him, just to see if he would get the implied insult in being presented with damaged books. He didn't, but thanked me and looked for more.

In the Wrong Job

Another advertising manager had been a commercial artist. He should have kept on being one, because he was pretty good at that. In formulating advertising policy he was not so good. He did want to boss a lot of people, however, and about nine-tenths of his

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appropriation went to salaries for as many helpers as he could get. I often wondered how ninety thousand dollars' worth of helpers justified themselves in spending the ten thousand dollars that was left out of the hundred-thousand-dollar appropriation. And yet this man held his job for years, always saying that he was getting his firm ready to do some real advertising "when the time should be ripe." The time has not ripened yet.

I have seen this sort of thing in varying degrees again and again. The president or the board would accept the budget of the advertising manager for, say, a \$200,000 advertising appropriation.

\$85,000 Cost of Spending \$50,000

That sounded pretty good to the agent, who would proceed to prepare a \$200,000 campaign, later to be told that \$85,000 had to go to the advertising department, an irreducible minimum. An item of \$50,000 had to go to printed matter, postage, correspondence which this department handled (that possibly might be cut to \$45,000), the \$85,000 salary list being the amount of expense required to spend the \$50,000. Then \$10,000 must go to sampling, another irreducible minimum. Another \$10,000 was to put in an emergency fund, and \$6,000 more must

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be used to make up for the amount last year's expenditure ran over last year's budget. Finally the discouraged agent had to cut his estimate down from \$200,000 to \$54,000, a sum utterly inadequate to do what the advertiser needed to do in space and copy. Neither the agent nor the publisher ever had any faith in advertising which didn't run.

When you have your mind set on doing actual advertising, it is surprising to see how many items can go into an advertising budget that have little or nothing to do with telling the public about the merchandise.

A Wide-meshed Thin "Blanket"

Sometimes the agent hears an advertising manager talking about "blanketing the country" with advertising. This country has a population of over a hundred million, and such a blanket of advertising for a year at a cost of \$54,000 for the whole country would be of the nature of cheesecloth with meshes a rod or two across and "cover" about one-third of one person out of a hundred. Such a "campaign to capture the nation" goes forth with the expenditure of energy costing one-twentieth of a cent per year per person.

And yet an advertising manager is very important to an advertiser. A firm's advertising will be good as

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its advertising manager is good. Rarely can even a very good agency make it better.

As an agent I have known often that I ought to say to an advertiser, "Your advertising will never be right as long as you keep your present advertising manager." I might have had the courage to say it if I had thought it would do any good, but the fact that the advertiser has and keeps that kind of man seems to indicate that he is the kind he wants. Often he doesn't know any better. Usually he regards the advertising manager as a factor apart from himself, which should not be the case in serious advertising.

Be Careful Whom You Hire

Employers are responsible, of course. Sometimes these advertising managers are the sons or nephews of members of the firm, too choice to be put in overalls behind a machine, too important socially to be made clerks, and too foolish to be valuable anywhere. It is a fact that some advertisers have employed their advertising managers to act as buffers, to save time for the heads of the firm by speaking pleasant nothings to advertising men who visit them.

This does not require much of a man, though it's a good job for a pleasant little man. Afterward comes the thought that as long as he has the title,

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“advertising manager,” it may be up to him to do something for the firm’s advertising. Possibly all he is equipped to do is to check on space runs and to kick, in season and out, about everything, so he shows his importance by doing these things. Obstruction to good work is one of the great iniquities of business.

Under these circumstances some of the best advertising copy ever written has had to go to the waste basket, yes, very much of the best copy has gone there.

These are the days of increasing power and production through well-engineered coöperative of action. Copy writers can write advertisements, artists can illustrate them, space buyers can appraise space values and purchase space, and checkers can check them after they have run; but the coöperation that makes good advertising involves the closest and most friendly coördination of effort between publisher, producer of copy (usually the agency), and the advertiser himself. In being the official mouthpiece of the advertiser, knowing good work when he sees it, being able to inspire good work, stimulating the intelligent enthusiasm of the writer, feeding him with necessary facts, preventing an excessive or dangerous flow of that enthusiasm, the advertising manager is priceless if he is good. He performs a necessary

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and important function. He should be an able and tactful man, and when he is, you may expect good advertising to follow. The important advertiser does not ignore his advertising manager as an unimportant employee, but works as intimately with him as he does with his sales manager or treasurer.

The Expensive Cheap Man

If he is too cheap, either in his cost or his abilities, the advertising manager is dangerous. If his reactions are primarily negative he blocks real progress. If he fancies himself as watch dog of the treasury, his firm keeps its money in the safe and does not get the advertising it needs.

If he is of inferior capacity, many things prevent him from seeing himself as he is. It is easy for him to get into print. The advertising trade papers are naturally glad to get articles from him because the experiences and points of view of advertisers furnish the most important feature which they can offer to their readers. Publishers and agents make much of the advertising manager, greet him effusively, defer to him personally, because of his position and the money he has to spend. All these things may and often do go to his head and spoil him.

The advertiser himself is to blame for a poor ad-

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vertising manager. If he gives him the job and title because he is his son or his great-aunt's grandson or because he is sorry for the boy or because of whatever reason except that he is an able advertising man, he, the advertiser, pays the price just as he would pay in the case of a crooked or incompetent treasurer. A treasurer may run off with several hundred thousand dollars and not do one-half as much harm as the advertising manager who chokes or vitiates the good advertising which the firm needs. The treasurer, if crooked, can only steal some of the money already earned; the incompetent advertising manager can help smother the potential earning power of the future.

Call your advertising man advertising clerk till he is a real advertising manager.

Fortunately for advertising, a group of high class business men are making the title advertising manager a title of high repute.

Of course there are as many stories of how men have got their real start in advertising agency work as there are men who have made their starts. Before an agency man gets a real start, in the shape of good client connections, he feels helpless indeed; "rarin' to go," but no place to go to, full of desire to do and praying that he may find something to do.

CHAPTER IV

Getting a Foothold in the Agency Business

A Product from the Orient

MINUTE Tapioca Company of Orange, Mass., has been a national advertiser for many years. This business was started as the Whitman Grocery Company and built up a small volume on grocery products packed in paper bags. It developed a growing business on a quick-cooking tapioca, using the Minute Man at Concord as its trademark. Its career has been a revelation to me of the possibilities of even a thin market food product. Not everybody likes tapioca, and a package of it makes so many puddings that a dollar a year retail turnover to a tapioca-using family must be way above the average. And yet this business has grown steadily for many years.

I had been calling on this firm for several years as a magazine representative and had formed a very enjoyable friendship with Eben Gridley, its general manager. The company had placed its advertising

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direct for many years but at last decided to use agency service, and I was invited to tell Mr. Gridley what I thought Batten's could do for them. We secured the business. I tried to act as if I was accustomed to securing substantial accounts, but really I was much excited, both with getting my first good client and in working with a man I was so fond of as I was and am of Eben Gridley.

Gridley not only gave me the job, but got an appropriation of ten thousand dollars more than strict mathematics told them they ought to spend.

A No. 10 Shoe on a No. 5 Foot

We had to make a modest appropriation of \$25,000 go as far as possible. Even then that would not buy much big space in women's magazines at from \$4,000 to \$6,000 a page, so we used a few half pages and a lot of small advertisements with rather brilliant name display.

We calculated the number of insertions multiplied by the circulation of each magazine, and figured that we had over forty million single advertisements per year, even though most of them were very small.

That little trick of counting the number of advertisements is a consolation, particularly to an advertiser who cannot boast of large numbers of full pages

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in a list of magazines. In this case we had very few large spaces to tell the trade about, just enough to make a fair showing in a folder to the trade. But two inches, we argued, was an advertisement, and just as many copies of the *Ladies' Home Journal* were distributed when we had two inches hidden in it somewhere as when we used a page or half page. If the circulation was one and a half million, a million and a half copies of our tiny advertisement were distributed, just as many as the man had who bought a two-page spread in color in that same issue. What the results from the two inches could be as compared with the big space was a matter which we didn't mention in our trade folder. Gridley was anxious, though, for the time when he could begin to use pages in color and, as far as he went, be as big as anyone.

When Minute Tapioca used its first color page in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, it made quite a stir in the home town of Orange, Mass. A stationer displayed this page in his shop window for several days, and it was a matter of much comment by the neighbors, who, of course, would ask Gridley what the page cost. When he told them \$6,000, the reply was likely to be, "Gee, but you've got your nerve with you," or, "You'll never get your money back."

We had great excitement in preparing this color

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page—a recipe page—and so far as I know it was the pioneer and pace setter of many such recipe pages. It may be a case of me and mine, but I don't believe I have ever seen a better or more effective page of food advertising before or since.

At that time I had begun to fancy myself as an exponent of speed and adequacy, but Gridley beat me to it by suggesting the use of color pages. He asked me which was using more space in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, Minute Tapioca or Jello. My answer was, "Jello, of course." "You are wrong," said Gridley. "We are using more space, but Jello is using only color pages. Several people of whom I asked the same question I asked of you, gave me the same answer." Solon Wilder did the same thing to me a year or so later when he urged color pages for Florence Oil Stove in a group of magazines while I was yet too timid to suggest them to him.

So my little trick of a few large spaces and a lot of small "reminder" copy gave place to the trick of page broadsides—as many as we could afford, thanks to the courage and vision of these two men.

Oil Stoves and Soft Drinks

A short time after starting on the Minute Tapioca job, I secured the advertising of the Florence Oil

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Stove. Solon Wilder and Harvey Brooks of this firm also became my great friends. We were working on a man-sized job, trying to make a national business come out of a little stove foundry in Massachusetts, and we did it.

A little later, Batten's turned over to me the Clicquot Club account, and here again I made some great friends—Earle Kimball, head of the firm, whose personal business genius has brought it from almost nothing to the great business it is, and Charles Sanford of blessed memory. I have never seen a more complete business idealist than Kimball. I honestly believe that if grinding up diamonds and putting them into Clicquot Club would make a better ginger ale, Earle Kimball would attach a diamond grinding room to his beautiful plant and send someone to Africa to bargain for first-water diamonds. Even bargaining is a business ideal with Kimball. If horses were still important he would be a fine horse trader.

When Solon Wilder and Harvey Brooks and I were working together in 1915 to make a real business for Florence Oil Stove, I asked Harvey how the actual heat power of the Florence burner compared with that of a very important competitor.

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Harvey thought the Florence burner was more powerful, but couldn't prove it. So we bought a competing stove of three burners, six big iron pails and six chemical thermometers. We put a carefully measured amount of water into each pail and put a pail over each of the three burners of the two stoves, carefully registering the temperature of the water in each thermometer and taking a reading every five minutes.

At the end of the first five minutes the competing stove was slightly ahead, and Harvey was heart-broken. At the end of ten minutes the Florence was quite a bit ahead. After a while the water boiled in the three pails over the Florence burners, but even by continuing the test an hour longer we did not succeed in getting the water that was over the competing stove up to the boiling point.

Then we took careful measurements of the water left in the pails, its temperature at the end of the test, calculated the number of heat units which had been used for raising the temperature plus the heat units which had been used for evaporation, and found that the heating power of the Florence burner under actual kitchen conditions was to that of the competitor as 9 to 5, pretty nearly double, the only

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advantage which the competitor had being the fact that its burner kindled and got into full power a trifle quicker.

Advertising Must Be Polite

We should have liked to use this data in advertising, but we knew that the publishers of the magazines would not let us do it, so we did not even try. The competitor was an advertiser in the same magazines, which had to protect him against being picked out by name for unfavorable comparison. A vague statement that such a test showed superiority over some other oil stove would have been valueless. "The leading competitor" or "a leading competitor" would have been too pointed.

Here was a fact important to the housewife, and the nearest we could come to telling it to her was to coin the slogan or keynote, "More heat, less care," the "less care" referring particularly to the wickless Florence as compared with wick stoves. Maybe we can't throw bricks at a publisher for prohibiting knocks at competitors who may also buy space in his pages, although publishers themselves have the habit of publishing deadly parallels showing how much more space or how many more dollars' worth of it they carry than their competitors. Some even publish

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these comparative lists to prove that they are in the glorious position of second place or third. However, these figures may be important to the space buyer if the statistics can be depended upon for accuracy, and there is a pretty good opportunity to check on that.

At first it is difficult to get the significance of statements where several papers all seem to be leaders. In Boston, for example, one paper may lead in display advertising, another in combined classified and display; perhaps one is ahead in daily, another in Sunday and daily combined. This may make it look as if there were several leaders, as in fact there are. Boston is not a one-paper town.

Sometimes the publisher who is really in first place with respect to influence doesn't act as if he knew he was. Someone else may have topped him in circulation or lineage. But that does not necessarily represent greater value or influence. It is not always the largest circulation which is in first place. I would rather buy at the same price a million of circulation which I knew the periodical had because its editorial influence earned it, than a million and a quarter which was put on by forced selling of a kind which makes the subscriber undervalue the thing he has bought.

There is much romance in personal service work

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in advertising. When you can do your job successfully and see your clients prosper with your help, it all becomes the keenest pleasure. A doctor dismisses a patient when he cures him, an agency man keeps on helping him to get stronger. My only complaint is that I didn't have enough years of that kind of work of doing personal jobs for clients, going around among the trade, keeping my eyes open for means to outrun competition, starting on a new campaign as soon as we got one under way and trying to make the new one more effective than the last. While it lasted I had the time of my life.

The Knight-errantry of Advertising

The account representative lives in the midst of the romance of advertising. He is bustling about everywhere all the time, but he is in the midst of a good show and if he is good for anything himself he is acting a good part. With any ability to learn he will absorb a vast amount of valuable knowledge. Naturally he wants to graduate from such a strenuous job, but at the same time he knows he will miss its constant action and vivid coloring.

If my clients ever kept a business secret from me, I was not aware of it. They told me their conditions, their objectives, their volume, their gains or losses. I cannot understand Claude Hopkins' statement that

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his clients were not his personal friends. I do not see how they could help being such.

It seemed to me that I was a long time getting started with a reasonable list of good clients. Friends who wanted to help me told me that of course I was all right but had no reputation as an advertising man. My magazine representative friends might recommend me to advertisers, but it would do no good until I acquired a personal reputation.

Go Get It!

It is difficult in a business which rates personal reputation so highly to help a man without any such reputation. If you need a start you must have a reputation to get one and you can't get one without a start, and there you are. I never could quite figure out the science of it, but advertising men, prize fighters, and lawyers all do get a start somehow.

With a good start it is easy, if you behave yourself. Good work for one client breeds other clients, though even then you have to go and get them. They do not rain in on you.

Some years ago dear old Charley Sanford of Clicquot and I were visiting the modern plant of Schule, proprietor of Schule's Grape Juice. We complimented him on his factory and he told us how hard he had worked to build it up, how he had

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started manufacture in his wife's kitchen, etc. With great disgust he told of a woman to whom he had shown the place, whose remark was, "Oh, Mr. Schule, ain't you lucky!"

"Lucky, my Gott!" said Schule. "Did she think it all just snowed in on me?"

Agency customers rarely snow in on you; you go and get them when and where you can. An abandoned slogan of Batten's was, "We go anywhere for business." Mr. Batten, who was a sensitive man, thought that might be capable of misinterpretation and dropped it.

When I was teaching science in the Springfield, Illinois, High School, Judge Wheeler was a member of the school board and I went to him for a raise. The Judge said, "I don't see how we can give it to you. If you were a married man we could and would." I replied that I couldn't get married to get that raise because my salary wouldn't let me save enough to get married on. The Judge replied, "I see—it's the old difficulty; you're damned if you do and damned if you don't."

A Million Is Small, When You've Got It

About the time when I left Batten's New England office for the home office in New York, the Florence

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Oil Stove business, which when we began to handle the advertising was doing a volume of less than two hundred thousand dollars a year on its trademarked line, had grown to more than a million. In the years before this we used to talk about that million, which we hoped for as an ultimate goal. When it came we were looking far ahead of that, but I did keep track of the progress and wrote to my friend and client, Solon Wilder, congratulating him.

Wilder was a delightful human being, so sincere and wholesome that he won everybody's love, and so full of a kindly humorous type of good sense that he won respect with that love. He was somewhat interested in politics and so popular that we predicted for him ultimately a United States senatorship or some other high political position. I find in my papers a personal letter from him in answer to mine congratulating him on the million. A few words from this letter show a bit of the philosophy of this man, a philosophy held by many business men.

"I really believe you are more pleased at that million dollars than any of us. In passing let me state that there were no thrills, but rather a species of contentment.

"Speaking about mountain peaks, I remember climbing Mount Lafayette once upon a time; we

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would look ahead of us and see one peak which would look like the top of the mountain, only to see another looming ahead of us when we reached the top of the first one. I should say that this continued about a dozen times, so I got this lesson from Mount Lafayette when I was young.

"As you indicate, we have already relegated to the past our 'accomplishment,' and it really is distracting and almost immodest to think too long about a paltry million dollars."

Advice Is Good—to Pass Along

We once had a client who was in one way a great disappointment. He conceived big ideas and planned to do big things, but he rarely accomplished them. His campaigns of advertising were not carried out because he could not get ready to start. With him another business year had to begin before the last one was well under way.

I wanted to put a bomb under him, to wake him up, to teach him to get others to do the things he never quite got ready to do himself. So I sent him a copy of the catechism which is reproduced below. I made it personal, saying that I had prepared it as a little checkup and reminder for myself, which was true. So as not to single him out for this attack, I

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sent it to a dozen of my friends and asked them what they thought of it.

I got replies from all of them, and each answer was one of two statements, with individual wording, of course; either, "Your catechism got my goat. It hits me between the eyes. Why do you pick on me?"—or, "I know just the man your catechism hits, and if you don't object I am going to send him a copy." These replies were about evenly divided, indicating that about half of the people think that admonition is a fine thing to pass along to the other fellow, who really needs it, and that a habit of self-analysis is common to the other half.

AM I A HANDICAP TO MY BUSINESS?

A Catechism

Presumably I am good for something in my own business, else I would fire myself or be fired. Besides being an asset, am I also a handicap?

Now is a good time to dig under my shell of habit and routine and ask myself a few real question.

QUESTION 1. *Am I at fault in not being sufficiently methodical?* Do I console myself with the thought that the biggest men are not detail men, and draw the weird conclusion from this

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that I am a big man because I am a slipshod one?

QUESTION 2. *If I am not methodical, do I see to it that method is taken proper care of by my secretary or some competent helper? Do I insist that this helper shall punish or rebuke me when I need it?*

QUESTION 3. *Am I prompt or dilatory? Do I realize the importance of getting important things done promptly, or do I permit valuable time to be wasted in endless discussion?*

QUESTION 4. *Do I readily forget yesterday's undone things, or do they haunt my conscience as they should?*

QUESTION 5. *Do I "potter"? Am I convinced that I am the only one in my shop fit to decide on anything or do anything important? If so, why don't I fire the bunch and hire some real people?*

QUESTION 6. *Is my tongue the spokesman of my intellect, or do I ever let it interpret my indigestion? In other words, can I ever afford to be unamiable?—a grouch is a bum asset in business.*

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QUESTION 7. *Does pride in my own opinion loom bigger than the truth?* I see this fault in many; do I fail to see it in myself?

QUESTION 8. *Am I trying to do too many things?* Am I entitled to direct my business or my department until I can insist on promptness and efficiency in my subordinates as well as in myself, or until I can delegate things which others ought to do?

QUESTION 9. *Do I ever let stubbornness take the place of judgment?* There is a right and a wrong answer to every question; do I think that mine must be right because it is mine?

QUESTION 10. *Am I too timid?* Do I therefore fail to grasp the splendid chances which courage and enterprise turn into wealth?

QUESTION 11. *Can my courage, or lack of it, be shown by the kind of epigram I am apt to like?* For example, which naturally appeals to me more: "Better be safe than sorry," or, "The early bird catches the worm"?

QUESTION 12. *Am I a comfortable man to work with?* Does some of the internal friction

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which I am apt to blame on my associates really come from me?

QUESTION 13. *Am I making both myself and my business grow as fast as is reasonable?*

QUESTION 14. *Am I ready to change my habits, educate myself, fire myself, exalt myself, humble myself, or do anything else to myself which shall be for the good of my business?*

This Is Enough for This Time!

The man I particularly aimed this broadside at wrote back: "That catechism is great stuff. I know a man it just hits and I am going to send it to him."

I have always been enthusiastic for good advertising, and of course that means copy. This fact will explain the enthusiasm for copy men which gushes forth in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

I Take Off My Hat to the Copy Man

I DO not take off my hat to every one who writes copy, but to the man or woman really worthy of that title of honor, copy writer, the writer of fire and imagination, who for some reason elects to devote those qualities to the service of advertising. I don't care what that reason is. It may be zeal for that kind of work. It may be the difficulty which some with natural ability for expression have in finding the right things to write about. In advertising subjects are found for them. It may be the desire or need of steady income without the gamble of freelancing. It may be that commodities appeal to some writers as really the finest subjects in the world for writing about; that is an objective point of view, natural to some. Whatever the reason, I take off my hat to the man or woman who does this work well.

I have seen enough notable performances from these people, enough adaptability and keenness of perception, enough inventiveness and enough self-sacrificing loyalty to the job, to make me sure that

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my vocabulary cannot give them any exaggeration of praise. I have known and worked with many good copy writers, men and women. I wish I could testify to the brains, the vigor, and the sense of coöperation which they habitually show. I wish, too, I could picture the modesty about their own work and the spirit of appreciation of the work of others which is characteristic of them, the majority of them, at least.

Two Copy Writers I Know About

I do propose to speak briefly about two of them, Robley Feland and Harry Varley. These two men are very different in ancestry and in temperament. Feland was born in Kentucky and Varley in England. Feland has serenity of temper, Varley has a great amount of nervous energy. Each is a very able copy man. Both write vividly and in a very interesting way, and both understand people, which makes their writing practical. I wish I could always have Varley's advice on what I write, and many a time Feland has, in a most simple and casual way, pointed out for me a better turn of phrase or the simplification of a sentence.

Varley, outside of business, is a poet of no mean caliber. Some of Feland's writings, such as "Brown's Job" and the "Asset of Friendship," are literary

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gems. These two brochures, published as "Batten's Wedges," were called for again and again, and thousands of extra copies had to be made. They are alive with the true spirit of business.

Varley has conducted a business of his own, and I have no doubt has acquired an appreciation of some of the necessities of business, those things which it is sometimes hard for a writer to understand, such as the necessity of sales, of management, and of financial balance. Feland holds high executive position with a great agency and has learned those things. Each one loves to write, and each rates very highly the privilege of writing about important merchandise and service.

I have heard these men accused of being lazy, and they might admit it, but it is not true as I define laziness. Neither gets very much excited about a job of writing; he just does it. Neither jumps after work very hard, for it comes without their jumping. What some people consider laziness may really be self-respect and respect for their craft. Such men are not lazy when they try to limit the number of hours they work to the maximum of what their experience tells them is good for the quality of their work.

A writer whose work is in demand must be indifferent to many calls on his time if he is at all con-

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scientious about the quality of his work. Feland may have an important assignment of copy plan crowding him, and perhaps go over to Belmont Park and have a fine time at the races while the account executive fidgets at his absence "at such a crucial time." The next morning at the plan discussion Feland may produce the needed idea, and do it better and more convincingly than if he had listened to the account executive's fussing all the previous afternoon.

Such men do a great deal of editing as well as writing, and if they do it their own way they do it well. I wouldn't think of asking either of these men to rewrite someone else's job. They are not patchers and they don't like patch work, though all copy men have to do some of it. Either of them could be a success as a popular writer, but each is devoted to business writing. Few of the popular writers are their equals in word sense and vividness of diction.

There are many great writers in advertising. Some of them cannot show their gifts in their present jobs, because they are forced to write too closely to unintelligent specifications. What I have said about these two fine friends of mine applies to some others whom I can't mention. Some have the right jobs, jobs which give them the chance to do their best, but some are forced by silly management to dim the brightness of

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their lights and use their talents to do perfunctory jobs which should not be done by such men at all.

Making a Famous Trade Mark

Here is a story about the kind of things good copy men do.

About 1914, while I was still in Boston, I wanted to secure an interesting trade mark for the Clicquot Club Company and tried to devise one. I have been for years a lover of the *Arabian Nights* in Burton's great translation. King Solomon was supposed to have captured many genii, imprisoned them in bottles, and cast them into the sea after sealing the bottles with his ring. Sometimes a fisherman would pull up one of these curious bottles or jugs in his net, and, wondering what it was, would break King Solomon's seal, when presto, a great and mighty spirit would issue from the bottle and perhaps reward the poor fisherman, his liberator, with untold wealth.

This seemed to me to contain a good idea for the Clicquot Club trade mark, and I sent a P. O. (production order) from Boston to the home office in New York. In this I suggested a sketch of the Clicquot bottle with a mist arising from it, the mist to shape itself into the head of a smiling jinn, the

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friendly imp of the bottle. I waited quite a while for this order to be executed, and then the mail brought, instead of what I had ordered, the immensely superior Clicquot Club Eskimo kid.

What had happened was that several copy and art men (when I say I take off my hat to the copy man, I include the art man as a very important kind of copy man) had discussed this P. O., agreed that Dick's suggestion could be improved on, and proceeded to improve on it. I believe that four men were in on this evolution of the Eskimo—Robley Feland, Clifford Brimey, Ike Hazleton, and George Blake. The first two were copy writers, the last two were artists. They mulled the thing over, discussed this and that, and finally the famous little Eskimo appeared in a drawing by Hazleton.

This is the way these brilliant inventors and presenters of ideas worked then, and the way they still work.

Free and Unfree Free Lances

Say what we will of the fine men in the strictly business side of advertising, the men who work out the actual advertising itself are the bone and sinew of the advertising business. And, oh, what a group they are! All kinds of men and women, of course.

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Sometimes thrifty, often improvident; sometimes quiet and self-contained, often the princes and princesses of delightful sociability; sometimes egotistical and unreasonable, often of that childishly simple character which breeds affection spontaneously.

They are remarkable people and show it, possibly because they, more than others, have constant opportunity for expression, one of the basic human needs. Their whole business is expression. Theirs is the glory of conscious excellence in literature. The crowd cannot applaud them, because their names are not signed to their work. For all that the world knows, Mr. Colgate writes the Colgate advertisements.

Those who are best known as writers and artists in advertising generally have acquired fame in other ways: Tony Sarg, Coles Phillips, Maxfield Parrish, for example, were dragged into advertising work through their fame as artists. Claude Hopkins was personally advertised as an advertising writer. Bruce Barton, Helen Woodward, Elmo Calkins have written books, and contributed often to periodicals.

Copy writers and art directors do most of their work for others, and hardly know how to sign their own names to one of their inspired productions. I

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use that word advisedly, for they inspire many productions. Sometimes their job is with pencil or brush. Sometimes, and very often, it is with an eraser.

Tom Booth, the veteran art director, tells how the original Victor trademark was submitted to another phonograph company first. As it was then designed it showed a coffin as well as the phonograph and the beloved little fox terrier. This ensemble was too gruesome and of course was turned down. When it came to Victor it was submitted to Tom, who saw its possibilities at once and said, "Erase the coffin and you will have a wonderful trademark."

Genius, if real, is practical. Brilliancy of production is practical. Beauty is practical. Focusing on important detail and ignoring the less important is practical. Sense of art values is practical, especially when it can help to set advertisements free from untrustworthy exaggeration and poor taste and add interest and charm through craftsmanship in copy and in art work.

I wish I could sing the unheralded deeds of this band of fighters for brilliancy and sense, and show the tact and patience they have to use when some earthly minded advertiser blots out an inspiration in order to make room for a technical description of something nobody cares about anyway. In the last

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analysis these men create the product of the advertising agency. They personally interpret the advertiser to the public. But very rarely do they sit in the seats of authority. House executives and account executives dominate their work, and I truly believe hamper it oftener than they improve it. And treasurers criticize as too expensive the many experiments and rough layouts they would make to develop brilliant finish.

Journeys of the Journeyman

The journeyman copy writer is a glorious fellow, and too often, alas, he has to journey. Too often he is the victim of the very statistics which ought to give him his data, for the mechanical or statistical mind often sees statistics as the thing to be repeated literally to the trade—"Tell them facts"—while the truer perspective of the trained writer says, "Yes, give them the facts indeed, but with the illumination of sparkle and interest. Let interest create a hole for the facts to fill."

I may be a customer if you show me. I will surely be a rooter if you charm me as well. I take off my hat to the copy man because I was born to admire the man who can make objective and real the abstractions of beauty, charm and utility.

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In good advertising the desire to own, handle, and use those beauties, charms and utilities is made so poignant that we just must have the charming and desirable things for ourselves. We spend our money for them extravagantly often, but even our extravagances turn more wheels, dig more iron and gold, plant and reap more crops. And so we lift ourselves by our boot straps, actually and successfully, and the copy man makes us do it.

Perhaps individually we cannot lift ourselves by our boot straps, but collectively we can and must. Men and wind and steam and electricity, the forces of growth, the power of mechanics, the raw materials in the earth's laboratory, all these things in conjunction do lift themselves and each other by their boot straps into progressive, common happiness, that immense proportion of happiness which directly or indirectly is based on commerce. The subjective pictures in the inventor's mind, in the engineer's mental charting, in the sales promoter's vision, in the sympathy of the humanist, in the clear picture of the philosopher, become the objective progress of modern life.

And of all who take their part in objective production, no one handles realities more sanely and

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sympathetically than my hero the copy man. Advertising writers think of advertising as the great and glorious occupation. So it is. So also is the writing of fiction or the presentation of philosophy. So also is the surgeon's job, the transformation of politics into statecraft; likewise the production of food, utilities and luxuries, the job of the common carrier, the clever and mind-soothing make-believe of stage and screen, all the big jobs. Each of them is the great and glorious occupation. But the copy man must know them all, for sooner or later he must be the voice of each one.

Not Enough Good Writers

There is a shortage of copy men. There are not enough able ones to do the copy jobs as well as they should be done, so a lot of mediocre writers or worse are drawing salaries in copy departments. This is dangerous because mediocrity is so powerful that it can draw standards downward, and it does.

More than once I have seen brighter and abler men admire the work of some mechanically minded copy writer who with speed in production has become the fair-haired boy of the production force. The president says, "That is good snappy stuff."

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The treasurer says, "That is the most profitable writer we ever had. See what quantities of stuff he turns out per day."

He is always dangerous because he enthrones formulæ for writing and "good enough to get by" performance, and teaches brighter but less self-assured persons than himself the same doctrine. He is dangerous, too, because it is difficult to pick him out and recognize the bad part of his influence until after he has made a name, been offered a bigger salary, and moved on. He is dangerous because he seems to be so practical. His invention of a new type of advertising is likely to be snappy words covering up a dangerous presentation of bunk, a thing always bad for the advertiser who wants to perpetuate his house and name, no matter how many dollars it may bring in this year and next.

Where are we going to find this new army of genuine copy men and women that the advertising agency needs right now? I don't know, but one thing I do believe—we must learn to appreciate those we have, which means, among other things, first to give them a real chance for profitable and honorable careers in advertising, and second to adjust the office machinery to them and the way they work best. Why not? This machinery is all devised for the sole

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purpose that good advertising may be written and placed, and these are the people who write it. If Jones really works best with his brain and pencil after 2 P.M., let him play golf or motor or lie abed till his real hour for work shall strike. If Smith is disturbed by the noise and bustle and interruptions of an office, let him work at home or out in the park or any place where his surroundings are right for him.

Learn How to Treat Them!

Many copy men have become prominent in advertising, but the copy man has not yet come into his own. He was preceded in business by the treasurer and the account executive. Advertising began as a brokerage business with a minimum of service. Good writers were not needed to write the earlier advertisements. Lead pencils could almost have written them without human help. The treasurer, the space buyer, the account executive, all came before the writer or art visualizer. When these superior authorities recognize value in a copy man, they put him into the treadmill of a big office and make him grind literary grist.

He is the horse who must draw so many tons so many miles per day to pay for his feed, and he does

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not like it. Otto Harbach got out early and wrote plays for musical settings. Julian Street went into fiction. Richard Walsh became an editor and editorial writer. Rubicam is an agency head. Dozens of them have gone into agency management, and those now in business all long for the day to come again when they can chuck everything but the pencil and pad or the friendly lonesome typewriter, as their personal habits of writing may indicate. A real writer must write or be unhappy.

The copy man does not need to be pampered. That is not good for him. Letting him work in the place and at the time when he can work best is not pampering him. It is merely providing him with the kind of personal environment that belongs to him in an honest effort to get his best. The kind of work he does is the test of his value, not whether or not he behaves as well and as peacefully in the office as the office boy and the clerks must behave.

I am told that William Locke the novelist does his best work on the Riviera, so that is where he goes to do his work. If Harry Varley can take his car out on the Long Island shore, park it by the water and then forget himself in rapid and able production, then that is the finest place in the available neighborhood for Harry to work, with no time clock but the

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sunset and his own hunger. I am convinced that the copy man needs more practical consideration of his personal and individual needs. If he gets stimulus from the stir of a busy office, ideas from his frequent chats with his companions, then the busy office is the place for him. If these things bother him, confuse him, slow him up, he should work somewhere else.

We need the copy man's best and we are not always getting it. I'll fight him and expect him to fight back. I'll hold him responsible for his many follies and frequent idiocies of judgment. But I cannot forget that advertising is for the purpose of saying something to the people, and if he is a good copy man he is the man who knows how to say it.

It may seem to be a long jump from this chapter on copy to the next one on finance, but copy is possible only because advertising pays. How much it pays is a most important thing to find out. That a thing works is often demonstrated long before the accurate mathematical charting of its success can be done.

CHAPTER VI

Investment Value of Advertising

TESTS like that made to find the power of the Florence burner lead one to see the importance of knowing facts as accurately as possible, to get the value of their basic truth even when it is not possible to make them mathematically exact.

We realize that the financial man wants all the essential facts about the value of a business. How much does advertising add to that value? Apparently this is an impossible thing to determine with all the variations which exist in different cases. And yet important facts about it must be determined.

It was apparent some years ago that bankers preferred to help finance products of large-unit sales rather than those selling for a nickel or a dime. One-cent, five-cent, ten-cent purchases looked unimportant. Advertising men, on the other hand, learned by experience with articles of low cost that tremendous sales could be made on breakfast foods, candies, chewing gums, cigarettes, if rapid turnover were

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possible. The bankers learned it a little later. They had a respect for the more important products of chemistry and mechanics before they learned to respect advertising and the big sales volume possible with small units through advertising.

Financial Eyes See Advertising Now

In late years the financial eye has turned toward advertising just as the public eye has. Businesses in chewing gum and cigarettes have grown faster and even bigger than businesses which sell vacuum cleaners, marine engines and excavating machinery.

There once was somewhat of a caste system in American industry. The shipbuilder, the banker, the manufacturer, were at or near the top, as was the great planter. These shared the high places with the professional men, the doctors, the lawyers and the clergymen.

The "factor" or distributor was a bit below, except as the foreign trader and the great merchant gained power and rank with the imposing fortunes they were able to amass. The shopkeeper and small merchant, the salesman, who is the modern paragon, were considered to be of a much lower order. Not so long ago the salesman was called a drummer.

It was money or control of money which put the

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financial and manufacturing classes at the top where naturally they have tried to stay and with fair success. Now, of course, it is more important than ever that they shall "have the goods," both financially and mentally.

Limited Value of the "Watch-Dog"

To be a great banker in these days a man must be an appreciative student of advertising. He cannot afford to scorn advertising as an undignified, catch-penny device. There are too many billions of dollars of marketable good will extant which was produced chiefly by advertising, and too many more billions to come. Treasure must go out before it can come back with an increase, and the primary function of the watch-dog is to keep it from going out. The banker is no longer just a watch-dog. He has become very much interested in ways to keep money coming in.

To keep it from going out recklessly or wastefully is very important, but unless the banker is an appreciative student of advertising he cannot be a good judge of recklessness and waste in advertising. Advertising appears wasteful to one who does not understand it. A very successful advertiser knows that there is more waste in under-advertising than in over-advertising, granted solvency and adequate

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production of a good commodity. The man who over-advertises may build future values even if he is over-crowded in taking care of present opportunities. What seems in advance to be over-advertising often turns out to be just larger opportunity to manufacture and sell.

What is the right percentage of total income to establish the advertising budget on?

How simple it would be if that could be determined in the same way as current interest rates or the rate of insurance premiums, and when determined remain fixed. But it cannot. Each case is a separate case. One type of production may afford a different rate from another, and one firm may profit best by a different rate from another in the same line. The question in each case is, what percentage of gross income can be reinvested to get the most profitable rate of growth, both in percentage and in the value of the business? Inevitably that right percentage will be different in different businesses.

When a bank dominates an industry, it is in a position to say how much that industry can spend in advertising; and under those circumstances the wasteful plan of under-advertising is too often followed. Why is everybody so much afraid of what a banker will say? Of course we know the answer, but isn't it

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absurd, after all, that the banker, the man who goes broke if his money is not in use, should be approached on bended knee, as it were, by the man who wants to use it?

As the banker sees the insurance and investment values in the advertising of good products by good firms, money for advertising easily becomes a preferred loan. A characteristic of bankers is that when they see things they do them.

There are many things about advertising that the financial man should learn. One of them is that searching quality of advertising which picks out a million new customers for the product which already has ten million. That is easy to learn. It is not quite as easy to see how the great business which sells immense bills to only a hundred customers can add ten more of those immense individual billings. It is still harder to see how the firm with still more immense billings from only ten customers may find new leads through advertising to land the two or three more whose business they need.

But it is true that both the advertiser of a safety razor and the advertiser of great pieces of machinery which sell in units costing hundreds of thousands of dollars can each find leads into new markets through advertising, even when they think they have their

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fields entirely covered by personal salesmanship. These thin-market accounts are not always solicited very vigorously by publisher or agent. They are too hard to sell. That may be to the manufacturer's loss if he does not himself see his need to advertise. The popular market manufacturer is constantly solicited to advertise. The man who waits to be solicited before he thinks of doing a progressive thing takes his own risk of missing good opportunities.

Advertising is a hazardous occupation. So are banking, the practice of medicine, and the selling of peanut butter.

Banking is destined to be a still more hazardous business, and a still more profitable business because it is inevitable that it shall back advertising more than it has ever dreamed of doing. Powerful as the banker is, he is not powerful enough to change that fact, and now he is wise enough not to want to. Even gigantic banking combinations must make love to successful promotive enterprise. Bankers must make love to men of sales and promotion capacity.

Now and then we get a very practical demonstration of the investment value of advertising. By that I mean the additional value of a business as a whole, whether it is to be appraised for sale or is to continue and expand.

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Two Testimonies of a Kind

The two experiences which follow should be illuminating. Strange to say they came to me the same week, only two days apart. No wonder I had to try to figure out their basic meanings.

Harvey Brooks, of the Florence Stove Company, came into my office on a Tuesday, evidently with something interesting on his mind. He said in effect: "I am beginning to see that our advertising is a permanent investment. I have been doing some rough figuring and I think I see that we are to-day getting in actual results on our business a dividend or profit of at least 10 per cent. on all the advertising money we have spent in past years, that all that value is still in our business, that it is actually a part of our working capital and will keep on working, and that it accumulates good will value of an additional 10 per cent. per year."

"How do you get the 10 per cent.?" said I.

"Oh, that is just a rough figure. Really I believe it is more than that."

Thursday of the same week Earle Kimball of Clicquot Club came in, sat in the same chair and said without any preliminary, "Dick, I have been thinking about all the money we have ever spent in adver-

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tising, and I believe it is all still in our business plus about 10 per cent."

"How much have you spent, Earle?"

"Oh, call it a million dollars. I think I can see a million one hundred thousand dollars of actual value in our business over and above what I can attribute to any other investment, and this means an actual value of the business that one who wanted to buy us out would recognize in the name and standing of the product."

"Well, Earle, you are not going to sell, but if you were, would you sell for the replacement value of plant, machinery, inventory, and all those tangible things plus eleven hundred thousand dollars? If you did, you would be an easy mark."

Kimball agreed that he would not sell, that this figure was too low.

Where Does Advertising Money Go?

This experience, with its two independent testimonials, started me on the job of trying to formulate the investment value of advertising for a going business. I prepared a chart, entirely hypothetical, in which I tried to figure out the increment of value from that good will part of advertising which remains and adds to itself as time goes on and a busi-

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ness grows through honest merchandise, efficient production, and able sales work supported by advertising.

My justification for the hypothetical figures given in this chapter is threefold. First, I have seen the investment value of advertising grow in this way at much higher annual rates than I have given in these figures. Second, I have heard so many men, who ought to know better, say that advertising money is all used up the year it is spent and buys nothing except more sales that year. Third, the additional value which successful advertising gives to a business is rarely attributed to past advertising investments to the extent that it should be. Objective items such as plant, machinery, bank balances, get their full valuation. Good will is too often termed an intangible when it is the most obvious and the most saleable asset a business has. It appears instantly when one bright man is trying to sell a business and another is considering its purchase.

Let us assume the following data:

I. A trademarked article. It might be a safety razor, a soft drink, a food product, an automobile, an engine, a radiator valve, a radio set, anything which has a potential sale many times as great as its

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present sale, an article which will respond readily to popular advertising.

II. An annual volume of \$2,000,000 built up by sales work principally. Advertising has just become an interesting subject to the owners of the business.

III. A profit of 30 per cent. of the selling price to the trade, after selling costs have been deducted. Such a gross profit might be considered high or low. If the manufacturer must work on a lower gross profit, then a higher volume becomes proportionately more important to him.

IV. The manufacturer has agreed to a five-year advertising appropriation as follows, this appropriation to be financed out of profits.

Table A

First year	\$200,000
Second year	200,000
Third year	250,000
Fourth year	300,000
Fifth year	300,000

Note. With sufficient solid assets, the advertising might readily be financed by bank loans, which of course would add to bank profits.

We must be rather conservative all through these figures, so we say that the first year's advertising does

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actual sales work and carries over a good will momentum whose power gives it a value of \$100,000, half of the appropriation. We figure the other half as used up just as salesmen's salaries are used up.

The \$200,000 has left only \$100,000 as increased value to the business, but it has added ten per cent. to turnover. Let us see what that means.

Table B (1 year)

Original turnover	\$2,000,000
Plus 10 per cent.	200,000
First year's turnover	\$2,200,000
Original gross profits	\$600,000
First year's gross profits	660,000
Less advertising expenditure	200,000
Available profit	\$460,000
<i>or</i>	
Spent in advertising (1 year)	\$200,000
Added value to business	100,000

This looks like a loss. Often an advertiser thinks it is a loss because he cannot see where any new value is hidden, and he may stop advertising after the first year, wondering why some competitor seems to make advertising pay so much better than he can. He may lose out because he did not see that hidden \$100,000

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which was neither in the bank nor in the credit columns of his books, but which was sure to grow if advertising was maintained.

The second year \$200,000 is spent again. The promotion machinery has gained momentum, and that starting momentum does not have to be bought over again. The second year the advertising has proportionately more power per dollar spent, and we can credit to added investment value as much as the total appropriation of the second year.

Table C (2 years)

First year turnover	\$2,200,000
Second year increase (20%)	440,000
Second year turnover	\$2,640,000
30% profit on above	\$792,000
Less \$200,000 advertising	200,000
	\$592,000
First year's additional value to business	\$100,000
Second year's additional value to business	200,000
Total additional value to business	\$300,000
Total spent for advertising in two years	\$400,000

Note. So far we have credited only \$300,000 to the investment value of advertising. Considerably

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more good will sales value actually exists in the fact of two years of steady growth, but we are ignoring that to simplify our calculations. If the owner wants to sell at this stage he should ask more for advertising good will than our figures indicate. He should project a part of what follows.

The tabulations for five years follow. An annual increase of twenty-five per cent. in sales volume is assumed after the second year, and for each year a thirty per cent. gross profit over manufacturing, distributing, and selling cost exclusive of advertising.

Table D (5 years)

Volume of business	
at start	\$2,000,000
Volume of business	
1st year	2,200,000 (10% increase)
Volume of business	
2nd year	2,640,000 (20% increase)
Volume of business	
3rd year	3,300,000 (25% increase)
Volume of business	
4th year	4,125,000 (25% increase)
Volume of business	
5th year	5,156,250 (25% increase)

So much for volume growth.

Gross profits at thirty per cent. on these volumes

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come next, and from each year's gross profits we subtract the cost of the advertising.

Table E (profit at 30% of volume as in Table D)

First year profit	\$660,000
(less) First year advertising	200,000
Balance	\$460,000
Second year profit	\$792,000
(less) Second year advertising	200,000
Balance	\$592,000
Third year profit	\$990,000
(less) Third year advertising	250,000
Balance	\$740,000
Fourth year profit	\$1,237,500
(less) Fourth year advertising	300,000
Balance	\$ 937,500
Fifth year profit	\$1,546,950
(less) Fifth year advertising	300,000
Balance	\$1,246,950

Increased and growing profits indicate a more valuable business. Part of increase in market value of a business is arbitrarily credited to advertising as follows:

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Table F

	<i>Spent for Advertising</i>	<i>Increase in value of business arbitrarily credited to advertising</i>
First year	\$200,000	\$100,000
Second year	200,000	200,000
Third year	250,000	300,000
Fourth year	300,000	400,000
Fifth year	300,000	500,000
Totals	\$1,250,000	\$1,500,000

The justification of these figures lies in the fact that the experiences of successful advertisers shows that the thing works out this way.

We see that, after the second year, advertising puts each year more dollars of added value into a legitimate appraisal of the business than are actually spent that year in advertising. For concrete verification of this, study the development of any one of the twenty or more great advertised businesses which may come to your mind.

Now these figures were purposely made without reference to capital stock, made to show a normal development of a successfully advertised business. They are on the basis of a poorer performance than those of the two firms whose testimony as to investment value of advertising started me off on this kind of job.

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To show how conservative the above tabulation may be, let us compare the above figures (Table F) with the increased selling value of a business as based on increase in volume.

Suppose we appraise the business for sale on the basis of its gross earnings per year being twenty per cent. of its value. (If its net earnings are half of its gross it can pay ten per cent.)

Table G

Earnings of fifth year, \$1,200,000	
—Value of business	\$6,000,000
Earnings at the beginning, \$600,000	
—Value of business	3,000,000
Added value from growth alone	\$3,000,000

Spent, But Still in the Business

As figured above, we have not added cash capital for advertising, but have financed it out of each year's profits. In other words, we have spent it and find it still remaining in the business. That is just what a successful job of buying good will through advertising will accomplish.

Florence Oil Stove increased the value of its business through advertising at a faster rate than the first tabulation above would give, and at about the

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rate the second one gives, although it invested much smaller sums in advertising. The Clicquot Club business, which is worth many millions, was taken over when in the doldrums, and less than \$50,000 was paid for it all told. For a few years it struggled along entirely on the personal sales work of a small and hard-working crew. It financed itself, and advertising did not start until the business had earned the money to pay cash for it.

When Minute Tapioca Company was absorbed by Postum Cereal Company, its good will was paid for at a price which makes the good will building speed of the first tabulation seem rather conservative. Gillette Razor, Goodyear Tire, Campbell's Soups, Victor, Shick Razor, Pompeian, Canada Dry and many others have built up good will through advertising at high rates of speed.

I worked out some figures very much like these several years ago and showed them to a man who was and still is an important industrialist and banker. One of the companies with which he was associated was doing a little advertising through us. The product which the man sponsored and which impressed us as worthy to advertise was an engine for fairly general use in buildings and plants. As we saw it, this product had at least the potential of large vol-

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ume sale in dollars, and the possibility of selling a greatly increased number of units.

He was heavily interested in a number of other important products; and as an important banker, we thought these figures might impress him. I think they did impress him, but that he felt they were too indefinite, and we were not very successful in putting our point over with him. However, we got at least partly even with him when he was showing us a splendid modern foundry and pointing out castings which he was making for a number of very prominent national advertisers.

"Isn't it a pretty fine crowd we are working with in this foundry business? Here is something for Delco, here is something for Hoover," or whoever it was, and so on. Our reply was, "Yes, it's a fine club of real advertisers. Why don't *you* join it?"

That successful advertising money goes into permanent investment value has been thoroughly proven again and again by the great increase in the values of businesses successfully advertised. The final proof lies not in these figures or in others similarly drawn, but in the grand moving total of what has happened and is happening to such firms as work out their fast and solid growth on this same basis over a term of years.

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Perhaps a failure of some financial minds to accept any figures except those which can actually be checked against bank balances, inventories, bills payable, and so on, is the thing that gives the promotive man his chance to get somewhere personally. If the banker had the promotive faculty developed to the extent that his sense of financial accuracy is developed, he would rule the world without question and could give the rest of us just as much sunlight as he was willing to spare. There is a clew to a great truth in such figures as the above. Many have followed that clew to rapid success.

Specialization in banking leads to a broadened knowledge of the things which banking is for, and one of them is to finance promotion. Just so, specialization in promotion must lead toward the financial or banking knowledge needed to turn successful promotion into substantial and permanent industries.

Salesmanship an Empirical Science

Advertising and salesmanship are not exact sciences, they are branches of economics, a science which deals with phenomena caused by habitual as well as varying acts performed by men in their search for the means of living and enjoying life; an empirical science, which cannot become mathematically

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accurate in its formulation until the emotions, the likes and dislikes, the desires and the spiritual hunger of human beings as existing both individually and gregariously shall have been reduced to mathematical form. I am sure it will take a long time to do that. Meanwhile many people are making great profits through the use of advertising and taking advantage of a few of the chances which lie so obviously in front of them. The imaginative brain sees them, the mathematical brain not always does.

If bankers have been slow to recognize the financial import and growing investment possibilities of money spent for advertising, but rather have been looking at it as an annual expenditure of wealth which vanishes as it is spent and is wasted if at the end of any period it has not brought itself back into the till with a profit, this is probably because of the difficulty of making a chart of recognizable mathematical accuracy out of what happens to the advertising dollar.

The Cost of Forgetting Good Will

To-day the money lender is very keen to have a hand in the financing of successfully advertised articles, and there is small chance of recurrence of what is said to have happened some years ago when the

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owner of a well known brand sold his business on the basis of value of plant, inventory, etc., liberally appraised. He was surprised to find that his purchaser, instead of demurring or haggling, closed the sale immediately, and later found that he had forgotten to add any valuation for his name and reputation, thereby passing up a million or so which he might have had. He had figured out what he wanted to retire on, rather than what his business might sell for.

Some years ago I had contact for a short time with the Dexter Shingle Stain business, and learned that a man who wanted to go into the stain business had made an effort to purchase the Dexter business. They did not want to sell, and said, "Why do not you get your own plant and start in? You can do that much cheaper than you could buy our business even if we wanted to sell." His reply was that the name of a good and established firm would be worth much more to him than a better plant and equipment could be, even if purchased for much less money.

The possibilities of business growth may be much bigger with a five, ten or fifteen cent article than with one costing many dollars. Wrigley, Postum, the makers of safety razor blades, various advertisers of soap and cosmetics, have shown that enormous vol-

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ume can be secured on articles that are bought easily, used up quickly, and reordered.

Once it was easier to finance the production of an expensive piece of machinery than it was to get money for the expansion of a chain store business or the advertising of a five-cent candy. The expensive piece of machinery sold, it is true, for a substantial amount of money, but nickels and dimes have built the Woolworth and Wrigley buildings, and the significance of that fact is to-day well known.

It may cost less to sell a five-cent article to ten million people than to sell a \$500,000 article to one person. The gross volume is the same in both cases, and it is conceivable that the \$500,000 unit may be able to afford a higher rate of sales expenditure. Wastage may be more obvious in that case but may not be more real. Advertising may be needed to get the next fifteen customers for a quarter of a million dollar machine, just as it is needed to sell more chewing gum. Not only that, but the good will investment value for the maker of the fine machine may be proportionately as great.

Just as copy and finance are essential to advertising success, so it is important to know how and where the people may be found to buy the things we advertise.

A handwritten signature or set of initials in dark ink, located in the bottom right corner of the page. The script is fluid and cursive, possibly reading 'M. W.' or similar.

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Though a younger son of advertising, market analysis is growing so big that he sometimes threatens to overtop his elder brothers. Before getting into this subject, we must remember that there are two kinds of statistic lovers. One kind says, "Gee, that is wonderful, I wouldn't have believed there were half that many A's in a bushel of B!" The other kind says, "If there are that many A's in B, we should sell at least fifty per cent. more A's," and proceeds to work out a method of doing it.

CHAPTER VII

The Research and Engineering Side of Advertising

TRYING to learn the ways of a copy department and to present the financial truth about advertising are only parts of the great field which a general executive in an agency has to cover. He must be or have been or at least be about to be an enthusiast for and a promoter of research and market analysis. The research bug is sure to bite him sometime.

We can easily picture the beginnings of almost any successful business, particularly of the kind that can use advertising vividly and persuasively.

First, an intelligent and energetic man with some money or the means of getting some says there is profit to be made in mint candies. Mint is a popular flavor. A little thought brings forth an idea to give it individuality, such as the Life Saver idea. Then the man arranges for its manufacture, finds his costs, and fixes his prices. Next he gathers a group of salesmen, sends them out with the product, counter cards,

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etc. They sell the goods, the public takes to them—though this process is often longer drawn out than it seems in writing it.

The product goes. Money is put into general advertising according to the best wisdom and experience which the advertising agency can command. The business grows fast, makes a lot of money. Its owner now is a capitalist and, no matter what his profits are, becomes conscious of wastage and open to the idea of economy and efficiency, whereas in the early promotion stages he had to think only of promotion.

Promote! To Have Something to Promote!

By getting a business started profitably he becomes a customer for advertising. By making advertising successful and getting a big business he becomes a customer for research and for production engineering. He has learned that a promotive business in its building stage literally cannot afford the economies and efficiencies which it can use with profit in its enlarging and consolidating stages. Just so a small retailer cannot afford the conveniences of splendid refrigeration and display case mechanisms which become his necessities as his business grows.

Other problems arise when a product succeeds.

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Our mint candy is going over big; why not put some other products over big? Our salesmen can handle a whole line about as easily as they can handle one article. Why not make three or five or ten profits out of sales work instead of one? Why not add other flavors? Then what flavors and how many? These problems need research and market analysis. The job is to make successful promotion of one article extend with increased profits over several articles. At one time about all the production research and engineering a manufacturer knew about was to study and copy his competitor's line. And that is not a lost art yet.

At first, please remember, the only efficiency our manufacturer can afford is efficient promotion; he must get profits before he can afford to enlarge their percentage by means of costly but economical mass production. He must have mass sales to make mass production possible.

Economy the Servant, Not the Master

Sometime later, when his business has grown and he finds how much he can add to profits by better methods here and savings there, he may think that economies offer the best means of making profits, and forget to promote any more. Later still he will wonder why his rate of growth slackened or stopped,

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forgetting that what his customers think about his product is vastly more important than even cost prices and processes. By advertising he paid court to King Consumer and got the king's favor. Then he thought that Economy of Sales Effort was king, and the real king soon forgot him. Maybe he thought that he had reached the point of market saturation.

Research, market analysis, etc., are good for those who can use them to make promotion more promotive, and this often depends entirely on the makeup of the man who runs the business. The vigorous and speedy promoter of an advertised business does not always need special jobs of research, and couldn't use them if he had them if he isn't built that way (I realize that this is rank heresy). Often his speed and vigor take the place of exact knowledge, and the force of his drive carries his business into great success, so much so that his list of dealers automatically becomes the best list of dealers, and the towns where he sells the most could be made into a better A-1 list of market possibilities than even a list made from census figures. Great vigor often makes waste relatively unimportant.

Mathematics is the average man's substitute for business genius, though of course the man of genius

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couldn't be that if he failed to recognize the importance of figures.

A Pioneer Research Bureau

At Batten's we felt that we were pioneers in research many years ago. We had correspondents all over the country who would send us in fine reports of conditions in their localities. We would send our people lists of questions to be answered, and they would make the calls and give their reports: calls at homes and calls on the trade, either or both as we desired. These amateur investigators did their jobs well and gave accurate reports. We could get able people for this work: school teachers in their extra time, young lawyers who had some spare hours, and in university towns members of classes in economics. These were all glad to make a little extra money and they earned it well.

Clifford Briney was the man who inaugurated this work at Batten's. He was a pioneer in research. Years before research had been thought of as a major activity in agencies, Briney had this plan working and bringing in splendid results. I remember one neat and effective job in particular. We made an investigation for people who were going into the manu-

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facture of porcelain enamel ware. We investigated about forty items and showed that the habit of use of such articles indicated that about six out of the forty would have more than nine-tenths of the sale; that it would be profitable to make and sell these six and unprofitable to make and try to sell the other thirty-four.

Such a research organization can be built easily and inexpensively by mail and can be depended upon for a good grade of work. When this work is done by people in their own home towns, traveling expenses are at a minimum. The postmaster or the college dean, if there is a college in the town (we picked out college towns mostly because students in economics are often good at such jobs and at the same time can make a little extra money and supplement their course with practical knowledge), can suggest the names of competent people who would like such jobs.

A Bit of Economic Jargon

Research and business economics have added many words to the already picturesque advertising jargon. Of course every advertising man fancies himself as an economist and can talk very glibly about crowd psychology, economic values, cycles of trade, pur-

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chasing power, native-born white population, budgetary control, and all those things. (Sometimes we fancy we know what these words mean, but we use them anyway.) Economics was a favorite college study of mine. In the old days of red-hot tariff discussions I fancied my economic wisdom so much that I became a violent advocate of free trade and a great admirer of that remarkable free lance, Henry George.

As a seeker after economic truth—and often as an over-confident believer that I had found it—I have frequently used the words “basic,” “fundamental,” and “vital,” as representing to me the quality of assay in the ultimate crucible in which truth is tested. These three words became so much of a habit or jargon with me that Johns, Busser, Babcock and my other partners tried to pin them on me as a nickname. “We will now hear from Basic, Fundamental, and Vital, etc.” Realizing that possibly there may be some repetition of meaning in using all three together in battle array, I tried to cultivate the habit of using one at a time.

Advertising men are very zealous to have a foundation of facts on which to build a decent and solid structure of promotion for their clients. Once in a while they have to start the structure before they

Analysis of Goods and Market to Be Made Before Writing Advertisements

Who buys it?
Why does he buy it?
Who should buy it?
Why should he buy it?
Where does he live?
When does he buy it?
How does he buy it? (or How is it sold?)
Who helps or hinders buying?

Goods as they seem to

a—Manufacturer	
b—Manufacturer's salesmen	} Or other factors through whose hands goods pass from manufacturer to ultimate user
c—Wholesaler	
d—Wholesaler's salesmen	
e—Retailer	
f—Retailer's salesmen	
g—Consumer (or user)	
h—Competition	

Here is a worthy and interesting attempt to insure a basis of reality for copy writing.

This is a concise tabulation of the essential things which the producers of advertising must know in order to write copy. These data, of course, should be furnished by the advertiser. Simple as it seems, such information is not always available in complete form. If not, some research and market analysis is essential, quite

Aim of Advertising

1. Insuring future demand_____
2. Establishing trademark_____
3. Reducing selling cost_____
4. Establishing new service or idea_____
5. Opening new territory_____
6. National leadership_____
7. Intensive local development_____
8. Standardization_____
9. Sales of \$_____ by 19_____

as essential as it is for a vehicle builder to know whether his product is to be built out of wood or steel or both.

In these tabulations we have the basis of advertising agency research, the need of exact knowledge of what an advertising campaign is all about.

These forms have been in use for many years by a leading New York advertising agency and are reproduced with their permission.

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get the foundation. Some will look for an idea till they find a good one. Some will seize the first good-looking one they find. And so they seize an idea, name it, and proceed to pound it, twist it, argue it and make it useful in somebody's or everybody's advertising. To look wise and pretend to know all about it is a frequent pose of advertising men just as it is of doctors, lawyers, and clergymen.

Ideas are put into useful practice and become part of the working machinery of humanity only after they have gone through many phases of experimentation, over-enthusiasm, and partial discount. This is true in government, in the professions, and in all industries. And the advertising industry during the last twenty-five years has been working to engineer itself into stability and an understanding of its own laws, at the same time that it has been keeping shop and purveying excellent goods.

Of course the grandfather of all economic terms is "consumer demand," the old, old textbook expression. But consumer demand was a weak term for the purposes of advertising men, because it was something that many of the products we must advertise did not have. To the advertiser who used ordinary English, "demand" meant that the consumer had to have the thing and was out to get it if he had to fight

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for it. But perhaps sales were not very good, and the advertiser well knew that the consumer was making no unseemly exhibition of his determination to have these goods willy nilly. So consumer demand looked a long way off.

There were several hundred inventors of the term "consumer acceptance," a term which the advertising business took because it was needed. Its meaning is that advertising forces a product upon the attention and the consumer then accepts it.

Economically the natural onward march of a product seemed to involve first, that the potential purchaser must know about it; second, that he can be persuaded to buy it; and third, that he shall be so pleased with it that he will buy it again, or show it off and boost it. And this last blessed state means a real demand, a demand so insistent that the consumer would go into a store, ask for Blank's Shaving Cream, and if the dealer did not have it in stock march proudly out, leaving a remark that if this dealer could not carry the articles he, the consumer, knew about and wanted, he would proceed to take his trade elsewhere.

Some consumers have been known to do this, and many advertising men habitually do it. I have remained thirsty when I could not get Clicquot Club

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Ginger Ale. I have shown my scorn of a dealer who claimed that some other silk stockings were as good as McCallum's, or that a dealer who pretended to handle high-grade floor coverings should push any other linoleum than Armstrong's. I always came out of these arguments feeling very vexed because such an ignorant and unreasonable man was permitted to participate in "the glorious and knightly job" of pushing merchandise toward an eager public. Funny, isn't it, how excited we get over such things?

That, by the way, is the kind of loyalty which almost every client secures from almost every member of his agent's staff. Though blind, it is beautiful. It is not so idiotic, either, because these products really are good and the agent knows it.

It was a hard blow to me when I was trying to do work for the New York *Herald Tribune* to find that some of the poor benighted members of our staff actually read the New York *Times*. We advertising men may assume a pose of sophistication and boundless wisdom, but really we are quite childlike in our loyalty to a client.

Research, trade analysis, market study, investigation, are among the terms which are used to represent what an advertising agency sometimes does to help make the trade picture more clear, both for the

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benefit of the client in his sales work and in order to give the agency a more logical basis for preparing a campaign.

Working Up to Modern Methods

First came the department of research, then statistics and research, then market analysis or marketing department. At first almost anybody could head such a department, and then men of a statistical turn of mind with ability to make lovely graphs were the ones who landed these interesting jobs. Then came the marketing experts, men who had had experience in sales management and in charting sales and sales territories. The Simon-pure statistician was too thorough and consequently too expensive. He proved to be too much of a lover of statistics for statistics' sake.

"Thorough" is a word very often used by agencies in describing the way they do things. But if it is not an incorrect term, it ought to be. The ablest marketing man is the one who can make a correct diagnosis from a reasonably small amount of data and at a permissible price. When these jobs are done "thoroughly" they are tremendously expensive and represent an outlay that few advertisers can make at a profit to themselves. A small cross section of investi-

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gation, showing the high spots of trade or consumer conditions, is often just as valuable to an intelligent sales executive as an exhaustive study of the country would be, and much cheaper, even in proportion.

An Expensive Liability

Often these big, expensive jobs are, quite unintentionally, mere show-off jobs. The maker or supervisor of the research and statistical job has shown the work to the client with great pride. The client has gone over it with tremendous interest, because it shows just how his wheels go round or should. He has given unstinted praise, expressed unbounded admiration, paid the bill (very often bigger than either agent or client thought it would be), expressed an intention to put these facts and conclusions into practice, taken it home, and maybe there it still slumbers after five years have passed and earned profits without its use. It is such an imposing array of colored charts and illuminated graphs, it has so many miles of figures, that it seems as if it must still be valuable even though it is five years old. The thing has lain unused because there hasn't been time to work it into the sales system, or because the good men in the client's employ have always worked along different lines and it isn't easy to convert them, or perhaps be-

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cause the head of the house has said, "We're doing well now, let well enough alone."

No matter for what reason, it collects dust. No matter how absolutely correct and intelligent it is, the fact that it has not been used makes it a liability. The client gradually begins to think of it as a worthless expenditure of a lot of money, or perhaps thinks of his agency more as a purveyor of research than an inspirer and producer of advertising. The expressions "exact information" and "trade analysis" have become to him merely a part of the jargon. I myself am a believer in exact information and have been a booster for research in the advertising agency. I have at times been very much too enthusiastic over it, for, like many men in business, I have collected so much exact information which I never have used that its possession has often been a load on my conscience.

Good Hands May Be Overplayed

Marketing men are important in an agency, there is no doubt of that, but I have found that they are sometimes dangerous. If they are good they are usually cocksure, because they base their conclusions on mathematical facts. These facts sometimes overawe the man of imaginative vision and make him belittle his own thinking capacity. There is no conceited-

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ness in the world greater than that of the man of facts.

Good marketing men may dominate advertising policy unduly. Because of their personal training and viewpoint they may overvalue mathematical statement of fact for a given series of advertisements, and undervalue the adornment and interest which brilliant wording can give. I have never known a good marketing man who did not consider himself an excellent judge or editor of copy. Many of them have considered themselves good copy writers. On the other hand, I have rarely known a good copy writer who considered himself an able marketing man at all. Therefore the marketing man is much more apt to try to dominate and prescribe copy policy or to criticize unfavorably the work of the copy men, than the copy man is to suggest ideas or methods for market analysis.

Beware of the jargon of advertising and economics. On many lips these phrases are not more than words. "We must make the world baked-beans conscious" is of course an attractive thought to the baked beaner, whether it is to the world or not.

When an agency man says, "I am primarily a sales person," I wonder if by any chance he is really an advertising man as well, if he has any true apprecia-

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tion of the artistry of copy writing, or if perchance he is trying to sell advertising which the client may not particularly want, through the use of the word "sales," which everybody wants?

Exact Knowledge Is Rare

When he says, "The most important thing is an exact knowledge of your market," he is generally wrong. No one will claim that knowledge of facts is unimportant, but to the advertiser promotion is the most important thing almost invariably, and success comes almost in proportion as the agency man remembers this truth and applies it. Promotion antedates complete market knowledge. You can catch a lovely string of fish without knowing how many there are in the pond.

A week after I went with *Good Housekeeping* the plant burned down. A fine new building was erected and equipped, and among the persuasive salesmen who offered equipment were those who sold efficiency in the shape of an elaborate system to check costs. We bought it and installed it. When a compositor got a piece of manuscript he went to the time clock. When he had set some type on it and turned to another job he went again to check off, and still again to check on to job number two. With small pieces of composition

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he spent about as much time walking to and from the clock as he did setting type. All through the shop this accurate mechanical checking was put into force. But it took so much time to check time that the thing had to be modified or we would have gone broke with it.

Get Your Advertising at Work

In most cases the first and most important thing for advertising to do is to appear and get working, even if we do not happen to have an exactly correct measure of the Minneapolis-Duluth territory and its mathematical ability to become bean conscious. The assumption that where we already have a fair sale we can build a bigger sale if we apply power to it is probably correct, the important mathematics of it to be determined later, perhaps when this territory gives us the money to do it with and when we can use the factor of local experience to help determine how much we can afford to spend. The first fight is to get a foothold of sales. It has been done nationally, sectionally, locally, by salesmen, by advertising, by special deals, by mail. Any marketing man will tell you the best way and prove it, and often it will work.

Many a business has been made big through faith and hard work, so big, in fact, that in time it could

afford to become "efficient" and make still bigger profits by doing so. And I predict that it will be a long time before any other two factors of a business become more important than the two of having a good article and making it known.

We must acknowledge the importance of learning facts before plunging into advertising. Market analysis should naturally be furnished by the client to the advertising agency. If the client's business is large enough to afford it, he should not fail to have his own bureau of market analysis. If not, there are professional houses devoting their energies to doing that kind of work. If, however, the agency equips itself for that service and wants to sell it, and the client wants to buy it from him, nobody should object.

But don't make the mistake of thinking that an agent who is a good sales manager and a good market analyst is for that reason a good man to produce advertising copy. If there is any assumption to be made it is rather to the contrary. Such an agent might prepare fact copy rather well, but be somewhat weak on inspirational or artistic copy.

Even a copy department must take its tone from what the head of the house likes, no matter what brilliant geniuses it contains.

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Two young copy men recently started an advertising agency. From the outset it seemed to go with vigor and sanity. It has already developed into an important house. The basis of its rapid growth is copy. I am told that these young men are much concerned over the question of whether they can shine as brightly in market analysis as they do in copy production and the selection of mediums, and that they are keenly interested in developing that side of their equipment. Personally I do not believe that their agency will ever shine as brightly in market analysis as it does in copy. And it does not need to.

All Roads Lead to Copy

The factory type of engineering is not sufficient for an advertising agency. It has distinct problems of its own and there is little precedent for it to work by in an engineering way. Successful agency engineering must lead primarily to progressive and constant improvement of copy above everything else, a thing which the demands for market analysis make us forget.

A gentleman with exceptional and most valuable personal connections in a political and financial way was once the chief owner and silent partner in an advertising agency. People wondered how this agency

succeeded in getting so many important accounts. Its competitors were inclined to regard it as below par in equipment for first class agency service. This gentleman, however, could and did, through his personal connections, bring these large and important accounts into the agency which, of course, did not bear his name.

He was in no sense an advertising man. His experiences and tastes ran to finance and to politics. For the actual work of handling his advertising business he had to depend on men he could hire. He did not even know how to hire the right men, and it is doubtful if the right men would have taken the job. His scheme looked like a good one but it did not work, and his agency disappeared from sight, in spite of his exceptional advantages in securing important new business. His business lacked the essential devotion to advertising as a calling that gives the genuine advertising man his chance to make a living or better. "Physician, heal thyself" is important advice to advertising agencies right now. As never before they need to analyze their own capabilities and their own markets, to see whether or not their own "mob movement" to broaden their functioning is really working for the benefit of their primary job, the production of good and better copy.

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New forms of advertising have appeared and others will appear. What values have they or can they have? How can the right copy be supplied for them?

Such things as the "voice from the sky" may or may not prove to be good kinds of advertising medium. So may or may not the lecture at the town hall or at the club or wherever a man or woman who builds a reputation for good taste and authority tells about things which interest people. I have heard that a distinguished professor who lectures can "make" the sale of a book if he speaks about it favorably. If that is so, it is splendid. That is a powerful, most excellent, most legitimate kind of advertising, for which of course he is not paid except in the coin of his own appreciation of a good book, and that from the fact that there is such a book he gets interesting material for his talk. There may be oral mediums for paid advertising evolved in addition to radio.

Plenty of Chances for the Bright Boys

What kinds of advertising appeal will be most attractive five years from now?

What has the laboratory which studies the human mind and its reactions got to offer in answering this

question? When it is answered, who is to develop the technique of its presentation in advertising?

I wonder if advertising knows how to encourage an advertising engineer. It does not yet know him by that name, I am sure. I wonder if the skilled advertising man of this type is not rather likely to drop out of advertising and into some line where he can feel more opportunity for his engineering talents. Advertising agencies, greatly as they have progressed, are mostly in the promotive and growing stage rather than in the efficiency building stage. Where they try to build efficiency they tend to do it along standardized business lines, such as efficiency in departmental organization rather than in inventive production. No efficiency for an advertising agency can be real until it works for brilliancy of copy and art. Art efficiency is different from bookkeeping efficiency.

The civil engineer and the mechanical engineer show adaptability, practical sense, and vision. They can bridge equally well the wide reach of the shallow Platte or the narrow rocky gorge of the Niagara. A continuous advertising campaign is a structure which must be mechanically sound to stand up, and progressively beautiful to attract admirers and users.

On the art side to-day's vogue may give no indication at all of what the public will prefer next year.

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The public cannot possibly know whether it will like a new technique or a new medium until it has a chance to see the new technique or the new medium in use. So advertising engineering must provide for unlimited experimentation in copy. The one element of advertising which must be recognized, and standardized, is its very flexibility and adaptability.

Who can determine exactly that important concept but non-existent thing on which advertisers must work, the average working of the mind of the average man? There is no average man in existence—and yet the nearer we come to the perfect theoretical performance for stimulating buyers' interest, the more flesh and blood people we succeed in interesting.

But suppose we get our theoretically correct technique to-day. To-morrow education and experience will have improved the intellectual power and good taste of our non-existent average man, and it will need a better performance to capture his attention and interest.

It's a Long Climb to the Summit

The personal opportunities of advertising men are better to-day than they ever were, and twenty-five years from now they will be better still. That is an easy prediction to make, for it can be made of almost

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any basic art or industry. Advertising is the art of expression and persuasion. It is concerned with necessities, comforts, and luxuries, interest in which is bound to grow with the increase of the means of securing more of them. The world's wealth is growing steadily and will continue to grow.

The most important idea with reference to research and analysis that I ever got from my advertising experience is, I believe, a recognition that the agent needs an engineer's analysis of his own proper functions and how to perform them, how far to go and where to stop, considerably more than his average client needs the kind of market analysis which the agent can give him. He, the agent, has been too much of an opportunist in adding and subtracting functions and departments at the real or fancied demand of competitive conditions. He should learn whether his business ought to be a specialized advertising business or a general sales service. To-day he doesn't always seem to know.

Where Is the Agency Engineer?

Where is the engineer trained to do this job for the agency business? A number may raise their heads and say, "Here I am," but few if any can really qualify.

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Very few agencies have any fixed idea of where their services should begin and end. Demands upon them are increasing all the time. "More research, please—more marketing and budgeting work, please—you are making a lot of money on our billings, please do more to earn it." Such is the attitude of many large advertisers. Shall the agency give and give and give, for fear it will lose the million dollar client?

I believe that the million dollar advertiser should be content to see his agent make full profit on his billings. Even though the agent may have to give more work, per dollar of billing, to the smaller spender, he cannot give as much value per dollar of billing as he can to the large spender. There is not a proportionate value in the smaller campaign. There is not so much at stake. If the agent has both large and small accounts, the smaller ones are his practice field. Through efficient sub-caliber practice he learns to handle big guns.

Buick, Studebaker, Hudson, and Chrysler are competing in advertising just as they are in production and sales work. If one of them says, "Advertising is just advertising; I'm spending a lot of money and I want a lot of extras," he will probably get the extras, and having emphasized extras as the thing he

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wants, he may find a competitor getting much better advertising. Then he may learn that the production of superb advertising is worth its full price. The bigger a business becomes, the more human nature it has to deal with. Some think that if a business is big enough it can forget human nature.

I am stubborn enough to believe that the most important thing about advertising is the advertising itself. If it is good it is worth more than it costs. He who buys extras at the expense of his advertising robs himself.

Here is a very important question: is the advertising business being researched away from progress in advertising itself, for the sake of efficiency in market analysis and budgeting control of advertising? There is now accumulating a vast amount of accurate and valuable data on the subjects of budgeting advertising appropriations and in combining sales and advertising work to make each most efficient. Can we get its full value without losing other values?

I asked T. O. Grisell, who is eminent in this line, why he has not crystallized his experience and observations into an authoritative treatise on the subject. He replied that whenever he finds a method which seems to be the last word in getting and using such data, he learns shortly afterward of further de-

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velopments that can be made for speed and economy. Evidently he does not care to write a last word on methods which may be somewhat out of date in six months.

Perhaps the fact that the agent has not been able to determine just where he is going is the reason why he seems to be such a poor salesman of his own wares. We are quite sure that he has gone further in having fine things to offer than he has in learning the effective way to offer them.

CHAPTER VIII

Selling Agency Service

WHEN I first knew about the advertising business, the account executive had to depend very largely on his own ingenuity for copy, and to rely mostly on his own judgment in selecting mediums. Rarely had he the courage to advise his client to spend more money, even if more money really ought to be spent. He still regarded himself as a space broker, striving to make good by showing a profit to the advertiser on whatever amount of money should be appropriated, and for his ten per cent. he was expected to give copy and the detail handling of the account.

Back still further the agent had been a speculator in space. Having some ready money, he sometimes bought blocks of space at a low price in publications which needed ready money to keep from bankruptcy. This space he would sell to his clients at card rates, thereby making several times the normal gross profit of his regular percentage differential. This has not

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happened for many years to the best of my knowledge, but the agent was originally a space broker, adding copy writing as an inducement to secure business, and as a broker at least pretended to have some expert knowledge of the publication space he dealt in. His expert knowledge did not go much further than what the publisher told him about his circulation and its quality, plus what he was clever enough to guess.

For twenty years or more the service idea has had a strong foothold. Copy and art departments have been organized and highly developed. Rate men have learned how to make accurate appraisal of circulation values. They analyze all the elements; size of circulation, by what methods, natural or forced, it has been obtained, class of circulation, literary quality, general responsiveness. The size of circulation taken alone indicates comparatively little as to circulation value.

Rate men in agencies do not make any great fuss over themselves. No one except publishers' representatives makes any great fuss over them. Their product is not spectacular in appearance, just lists of mediums with the size and divisions of their circulations. Yet these men have become very important to advertising. They tell what should be bought and

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why, and how much should be bought to do a specific job and why.

The whole conception of agency function has changed, become more professional, more thorough, more dependable, as a review of advertisements published twenty, fifteen, ten, five years ago will clearly indicate.

A Good Product. Is It Well Sold?

The agency to-day is good, very much as Postum and General Motors are good or as some of their smaller individual competitors are good. The agent is a business man. He is organized. He has plant and overhead, and though he must have much of the professional in his makeup, he must sell and keep on selling.

About the poorest thing an advertising agency does to-day is the job of selling its own services to new clients.

An agency man may make quite a noise posing as the world's leading expert on radio advertising. Another may try to claim the glory of being the original exponent and perpetual monopolist of plans to coördinate sales and advertising, or the one of all others who can command the finest art work or possesses the most brilliant copy writer in captivity; the

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man with the only true vision and the only real technique of feeding fact to an open-mouthed public.

One agent may exploit a technical, physical or chemical laboratory and claim to start at the very beginning of production to show you by a series of exhaustive tests how your product may be improved. Another may employ, not by any means secretly, a battalion of professors of commerce, lecturers, famous business statisticians, or men who, for ample consideration, will go into your plant and office for a day, a week or a series of months and show you the fundamentals of conducting your business as it should be done.

It is a common thing in many lines of business for a man to present his wares or services as having special and individual merit, even though he may be following the standardized procedure of his industry in everything he does. Possibly he may make some non-essential variation of procedure so that he can talk about the thing in which his product is different. Some advertising agents do that. Being different seems to be regarded as a great virtue.

Such things are done and such claims are made for special things in agency service because many advertisers think they want these things, and the agent, always looking for high spots of excellence in his

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client's products so that he may exploit them, also tries to work out and present high spots in selling his own services. Actually, he is usually too busy serving to really want to sell.

After all, it seems rather tame to an American advertising agent to say only such things about himself as the following:

"When all is said and done, ours is only one of a number of excellent firms in the agency business. Some of our clients seem very much pleased with our service and coöperate with us to the utmost to get good and effective advertising. We like such clients. Others keep us nervous and in hot water most of the time. They do not seem to be pleased with anything we do and we cannot do so well under those conditions. We do not like those clients so well. We have retained our connection with some clients for many years. Others have left us after a year or a few years. Ours is a precarious business with reference to holding our clients, and changes are expensive. So we sometimes try to keep bad clients in the hope that we may see them turn good.

"We want to show you our organization. We want you to know and like our men.

"We refer you to our clients for their testimony. Those who like us will give us flattering praise. Prob-

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ably all of them will say some rather nice things about us, but it is possible that some may say they are tired of us and want to change.

"The great question for you, Mr. Advertiser, as we see it, is to select an agent of high ability, and there are several of those, but you should want particularly the one with whom you can work with personal pleasure and without friction. The relationship must be an intimate one if the best work is to be done."

That sounds rather tame, lacking the punch of the aggressive salesmanship and the persuasive eloquence which is supposed to go with advertising, but the most intelligent advertiser knows it is all true. Other advertisers, some of them very important advertisers, will assume the attitude that they must be sold; that their problems are different, more acute, more complicated than those of others; that they can or should secure a practical monopoly of the brains of their agents, that vigorous talk indicates ability, that selling is theatrical, that they want their firm and their men known as go-getters, and that their agents should be go-getters too. They want the agent to give an example of snappy salesmanship. He tries to do it and wonders why he does not either like the job or feel comfortable doing it. Theoretically at least

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he is a professional service man and not a snappy salesman.

Staging a Show

Agency sales managers are pretty much like theatrical managers in that they arrange stage effects, proper entrances and exits of the right men, scenery of just the right sort to hit the eye of the man who is keen on copy or art or trade analysis or whatever he may be keen on.

The door man is primed to give his best smile when Mr. Accessory arrives, accompanied by his Sales Manager, his Advertising Manager and his General Manager. Mr. Accessory and party are ushered into the President's office, where it has been arranged that the President shall chat a bit with these gentlemen and try to find a mutual acquaintance or two. Then the men who are to pull the different strings are expected to come in briskly, the brisk part being important. Not too many of these men should enter. If there are three or four visitors from the office of the prospect, there should be only three or four agency men so as not to seem to overpower the advertiser by sheer force of numbers. The psychology of ten salesmen talking to three buyers is supposed to be poor.

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"Mr. Blank, Vice-President and Sales Manager, you already know. Mr. Blink, Vice-President, in charge of our Service Department, gentlemen, and Mr. Block, Vice-President, one of our important Account Executives. Now, gentlemen, we do not want to waste your time. Let's get to, etc." (Business of being very businesslike.)

If we can take the prospect and his crew to luncheon, bully. We have talked so much about his business, "and, gentlemen, we surely want to take you around our shop and show you how we work. It is not a show place at all, just a busy workshop. Excuse me a minute while I take up a little matter with Blank." (To Blank: "Be sure that it *is* a busy place when we come back this afternoon. Have you got all the exhibits ready?" Etc.)

Back after lunch, and all the afternoon in a trip around the office. The client has never seen the camera lucida before, and that is interesting. The progressive story of pencil rough, artist's rough, finished drawing, etc., is always interesting, too, no matter how many times you have seen it.

The marketing head shows some exhibits of how we set one client right, avoided a pitfall for another, and showed a third that he was missing a most important slice of his potential market. Good show-

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manship demands that the audience shall still be interested at closing time and shall not have seen quite all the show. It is always hard to tear the prospective client away from the marketing department.

Once I helped in the solicitation of a very large account. I had a feeling of incompleteness of effort, however. We talked much about the client's business. We enjoyed the personality of the man we talked with and felt from his courtesy and friendliness that he enjoyed ours. But we didn't get the business. Something was left undone. It was a case where blatant go-getterism would have been in fatally poor taste and yet it needed just a bit more than we put into it. Afterwards we learned, very incidentally, that we had been chosen definitely, and the letter employing us had been written, but that the old agency came in at the last minute for a final interview, and, though the going was hard at first, succeeded in interesting the client in a trade analysis it had made in an important territory, and thus retained the business. If we had made the advertiser want us just a little more keenly, we might have had a defense against what came later. This is a frequent experience in selling agency service—getting on top but not over the top.

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Ours may have been a moral victory, but such victories pay no bills and raise no salaries.

The strange thing in the case just cited was that the advertiser decided to employ us because he wanted better copy. His criticism of his old agent was entirely on copy. We sold him on copy, but this territorial analysis intrigued him and apparently he forgot all about the copy. I can only congratulate the other people, as salesmen, on their obvious ability to change the subject. Changing the subject has prevented many a family break-up.

I have known of cases where everything seemed to be going smoothly toward a landing of the account, and then another fellow landed it because he had featured trade research or some other necessary appendix of advertising, and we had taken it for granted that our prospect knew of our superlative excellence in that direction. So it may be a good thing to show a prospect the whole show. Everybody likes a good show.

I have also known of cases of solicitation which, if presented on a Broadway stage, would make as big a hit as any other screaming farce ever made.

Don't Laugh! It May Ruin You

The agency man, if he has a sense of humor, must suppress it. It is such a very expensive luxury, in

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fact, that he must get rid of it, if he can, if he expects to go far and make much money in advertising.

He must know how to laugh, of course, for clients often joke. But if he sees the joke which is in the background of so many serious conferences and lets everybody know that he sees that joke, he is a dangerous fellow to have around, and his chances of being one of the numerous vice-presidents is in serious jeopardy. In chummy personal visits with kindred spirits of the art or copy departments he may let go a bit, but even that has its dangers. He is supposed to be jolly, but not funny. The boss may be awfully funny, but if you laugh at him, somebody may tell him that you laughed. He may not like it. Perhaps if he could realize how funny he is he wouldn't be the boss. He might go off and hide, and we need bosses. Business is more sacred than the church. I have in my own mind always felt that God must have a wonderful sense of humor, but beware of it when trying to land the estimable privilege of preparing and placing somebody's advertising of shoe laces or concoctions to make rosy cheeks.

The advertising business has no monopoly of this unacknowledged propaganda to destroy a sense of humor. The agent here simply reflects the attitude of business in general, for American business takes itself

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very seriously, and thinks not only that it has a right to but that it really must.

We may laugh at an old model Ford car but we take Henry seriously. That is the only way to take a business man, particularly a very successful one.

For many years there has been great medicine in that term "business man." It seems to mean solidity, activity, practical common sense, efficiency, control of the emotional nature, progress, all these important things. The fact that not many business men or any other kind of men have all these qualities does not seem to affect the magic of this title. Few persons seem to see the freakish, eccentric, stubborn, unreasonable qualities of some of these same business men. So if we laugh at their pretensions we are unpopular. They can come back, and truly, with the statistics of their sales, their increases, their profits, the growth of their business, and we choke our laughs and iron out our smiles and say, "You win, Mr. Business Man. Please let us in on some of this profit of buying and selling."

Lord Timothy Dexter may have been a joke when he shipped warming pans to the West Indies, but he was no joke when he made a big profit in the transaction. Profits and successes are no jokes, of course, but it is a bit sad that they may and often do make

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humor unpopular, because the world needs humor even more than it needs iceless refrigeration.

One reason why the agent is a poor salesman of his services is because so many advertisers are such poor buyers of agency service, not knowing what they are buying one-tenth as well as the housewife does when she buys a stove or something to cook on it.

The much admired business man is too busy to be a buyer, so he lets all kinds of showmen arrange the shows that are to sell him, whereas the proper sale of agency service is the kind of sale which needs an intelligently appreciative buyer. The thing to buy is ability to produce copy, and that is best indicated by current production. Intelligence to learn what it is all about is part of the ability to produce copy.

There is a natural sequence in the title of the next chapter. Selling is often just making a speech.

CHAPTER IX

The Flow of Wisdom and Wit

SPEECH-MAKING is an important part of the job of an agency executive. Perhaps it might be more accurate to say that it is a thing he is often called on to do. At salesmen's conventions he must not only explain the projected advertising campaign to the men on the road, he must glorify it. He must practice the arts of oratory whether nature has properly endowed him for the task or not.

If he handles important advertising he will be invited to address advertising clubs, Rotary clubs and so on; that is, unless he actually stutters or has heart failure when he gets on his feet to speak.

Only a few of the men who make business speeches will admit they like to do it. But there is a glamor in the idea, and if the date is a month or two off it is easy to accept, although the day before the speech is due one may wonder why he has ever agreed to such a thing.

The politician, the educator, the clergyman, the charity fund collector can often see a direct profit to

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be had from making a speech along the line of his occupation. The advertising man rarely, if ever, can. About the only thing in business oratory for the advertising man is practice. It brings him no more income; it is a distraction; the glory of it is chiefly in his own imagination. He bores an audience to death if he does it poorly, and he doesn't really excite them or change their characters, dispositions and methods if he does it well. Yet with certain settings of food and in certain business meetings his speech seems to be regarded as a necessity.

One Kind of Vanity Versus Another

The strange thing about it is that you can reason this all out, agree that for yourself speech-making is vanity, and yet when the Advertising Club of the Bronx says that you have been selected to give them of your valuable experience and thought, you fall again. You know that the result will be nil, and yet you fool yourself with the idea that there may be an advertiser loose in the Bronx, that such advertiser may be in your audience, and that he may get such a thrill from your words that nothing will do but that he give you the handling of his account, running into many thousands. It never happens and you know it, but you like to be asked to make a speech. Being

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asked is gracious flattery to you, and that is why you fall.

If you can talk splendid and important sense, then of course you should. With splendid good sense the manner of your delivery is of relatively small account. You will make people think. They may even carry something valuable away. You can read your speech or even stammer in delivering it and you can't quite spoil it. You may even be wrong in much that you say, but if you stimulate people's minds you do them high service. Anything even slightly below splendid and important good sense needs a clever and vigorous delivery. Then you need the tricks of oratory, so that your audience shall at least have the pleasure of being entertained. A genuine entertainer is always priceless in himself.

The speakers' committee of a weekly luncheon club which tries to provide either splendid good sense or a genuinely entertaining speech for each of fifty-two weeks per year has its work cut out. No club can land fifty-two good speakers in a year. Three is a good average. And three really good speeches will pretty nearly justify your being around to hear the other forty-nine, particularly if you have a good time with your friends at the luncheons.

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It is good fun to talk to a sales crowd or an advertising crowd which you feel is keen enough to make you do your best, and which in its performance or in its products gives you a worthy theme. You may really add to the equipment of some of the men by giving them some of the concrete ideas they need to get real confidence in their own powers. I have had great pleasure in talking to such organizations as the Curtis Companies of Clinton, Iowa, the S. D. Warren Company of Boston, and the occasional coming back to the Florence Oil Stove crowd as an old timer was always something like a reunion.

The Curtis Companies make woodwork, beautiful woodwork, standardized in the designs of the best period architecture. Going back to the prairie within a few miles of where I was born, renewing my acquaintance with the good people at the Curtis factory, was always a fine pleasure, and on top of that was something more. There were text and sermon in the fact that the same prairie which many years ago taught even the superior and self-sufficient East a new idea of government through Abraham Lincoln, a prairie product, is now giving us ideals of domestic architecture through a most modern firm which started generations ago as one of the many sawmills

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along the Mississippi River. The Middle West expresses the unity of our nation perhaps a little more vividly than any other section does.

This is the kind of theme that even a second-rate orator can wax eloquent about, once he really feels it. Such a theme adds nothing to the technical knowledge of a salesman about the woodwork he sells, but it may add to his power to see that the ideals and performances of his firm are of distinguished quality. Sometimes salesmen are fed up on the teaching of methods, and very much open to the other thing.

Confession

One night I told the potato growers of Aroostook County how to trademark their crop and make it famous by advertising. On that night the eloquent Joe Chappel followed me with an uplift speech. The two of us ought to have made those potato growers rush into print, but they didn't do it. I have told the Board of Trade of Amesbury and of other places what I thought they ought to know about advertising. Maybe advertisers are made that way, but I have never known any to be. I have told the salesmen of Disston how to sell saws, although I never sold a saw. I told the advertising club of St. Paul how to—I forget what I did tell them and so do they; I only

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remember the glory I felt the next morning when I saw in the St. Paul paper, "Eminent advertising expert from New York predicts that business conditions will be good," or something like that.

Really, it is quite thrilling to see your name in a metropolitan paper with the title of eminent advertising expert attached. Bunk, but pleasant bunk.

I have told a convention of clients how big a business should grow to be. I have instructed wise men on the duty of industry in war time, and told men's clubs in churches how much a page in the *Saturday Evening Post* sold for, and my theory of why. I have presented hypothetical advertising accounts and their theoretical development to advertising classes. I have even ventured to talk to a group of business women.

I have talked to a business show, trying to hurl my voice into the mouthpiece of an amplifier, while my eyes had to wander about an immense armory and watch the people strolling about from booth to booth—a situation where concentration is difficult.

There is only one way to do all this and keep your self-respect, and that is to forget how little you know or to assume that the other fellow may not know any more, and try to realize that simple good sense is the best thing you can give your audience.

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Try It Yourself in Los Angeles

A few years ago I took a trip to the coast, and through the pestiferous activity of Jim O'Shaughnessy, then secretary of the Advertising Agents Association, I was booked for a speech at the Los Angeles Advertising Club.

I certainly hand it to that organization for efficiency in driving their meetings and keeping within the time limit. I was supposed to have thirty-five minutes, or whatever it was, and wanted to give these Far-Western gentlemen some pretty high-class philosophy of business, so I prepared a sequence of ideas jotted down on some little life-saver sheets which I fancied I could conceal in the palm of my hand. This sequence of ideas needed all the thirty-five minutes for its effective construction; to leave out any of the cogs would be to strip the gears.

Soon after the food was brought in the chairman arose and said that the finance committee had a report, and two minutes would be allowed for this report. The man who made the report took six. "Too bad," whispered the chairman to me, "that cuts off a little of your time." Then he allotted three minutes to the introduction of new members. That took seven minutes. "Too bad," whispered the chairman to me

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as I buttered my chop instead of my roll. Then a special committee had a report. One minute allowed, five minutes taken. Again the "Too bad—don't worry" whisper. Then a Chinese-American tenor sang most beautifully. No encore allowed, but an encore was given—and it was a long one—while I tried to drink my ice cream and eat my coffee. Then the chairman of the program committee was allowed one minute—and took only fifty-nine seconds—telling what a famous and really eloquent gentleman was going to address them next time, and please tell those absent to-day to be sure and not miss next week's treat, which would be the best ever. Such an announcement seems to put your speech in the past tense before you have had a chance to make it. Then in a few words I was introduced, with twenty minutes for a talk which was a tight fit for thirty-five. It was too late to prepare another, so I started to boil down, an art in which I am not adept. While in the act of making a speech it is easier to boil over than to boil down.

I had planned to use antithesis, make a striking paradoxical statement, and then stir my audience with a still more striking explanation. I got as far as the boiled-down paradox, which was not of a character to take a boiling process without injury, when a

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whisper at my side said, "Five minutes more." I had a vision of somebody calling a cop if I ran over the five minutes, so I dropped the paradox and "let it lay" while I galloped through an attempt to say a bright thing or two about the wonderful metropolis of the West, and flopped into my chair, a winner against time by fifteen and two-fifths seconds, and on a hot day too.

I am constrained to say, however, that never was I more courteously and beautifully thanked for a poor job than I was by these fine gentlemen of Los Angeles. Possibly my last five minutes of praise for their town was what they had waited to hear anyway.

Learn to Switch Your Freight Cars

Later I was up against similar conditions in Hartford, but profiting by previous experience I got ready the kind of talk which can be broken off anywhere without injury to the talk or the talker, and I had a wonderful time. When addressing these snappy up-to-date clubs you should have a speech arranged like a freight train which can be broken off anywhere and still be a train.

An after-dinner speaker should learn how to fit into a reasonable and limited time or give up the vanity of trying to be one. About the worst-spent

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moments of our lives are those given to listening to dull and long-winded speakers. They are bad for people. They breed the murder lust.

Making a rough estimate, I should say that if about half as many advertising speeches were made as are made, and each one were twice as good, the effort might be worth while. I am aware that many will say that I am much too optimistic.

There are a lot of funny things about this job of speech-making; nobody thinks much about it except the speaker and the chairman of the speakers' committee. The latter only worries about it till you, the orator, accept his invitation. Then he checks off the job and forgets about June 8th. Your acceptance has balanced his books for that date. The audience just regard the whole thing patiently as something which has to go with a club dinner.

Joys and Pains of Rehearsal

You, the orator, try, often too hard, to gather together some real pearls of wisdom. As you collect them in your mind, they seem to have quite a luster. As you try to put them into words you are conscious of a slight dimming of that luster. It is hard to practice before a mirror, it makes you feel foolish. So you trust much to the inspiration which will come

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from an actual audience. You really should know that the actual audience will frighten you more than it will inspire you.

When the time comes you are as nearly ready as you are ever going to be, and you go to the banquet hall, where you know you will have either lamb chops and peas or a half of a grilled chicken, and you look for Mr. Jones, chairman of the speaker's committee. You feel a bit grieved that the members of the club who are coming in do not say to themselves as they pass you, "That must be our orator," and rush up and greet you as a young Democrat greets Alfred E. Smith. Previous to this you have walked about the town a bit to get a local cue for your introduction. Maybe you have found one, maybe not.

Even Jones, who is a little late, does not seem unduly excited over you, and you forget that he does this once a week and that the orators he meets are not as a rule distinguished senators, even state senators. A mere advertising club orator is to Jones only as a piece of brass pipe is to a plumber, part of the raw material of his trade.

Oh, Why Can't the Food Come Last?

At lunch you sit on the president's right, and like a good fellow he tries to make conversation, but you

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are thinking about your speech, and you don't know much about the people or the things he knows about anyway, so you feel that he thinks you are a stupid ass and you don't blame him. Every once in a while he relieves his own social tension by shouting to Tom or Bill. You envy him and wish you knew someone so that you could do the same. If he happens to know King Woodbridge, or someone else you know, you are all fixed for conversation, and he gives you a flattering introduction, which of course is a liability.

When the soup comes you wish you could speak now and have your lunch afterward—because those pearls of thought begin to feel slippery. New members are introduced and you wonder if you are to be the fellow who will make them sorry they joined. This thought does you no good, but you can't escape it.

Like as not you had to miss something good at home to keep this appointment, and you think of that. When the meal period is over and you are sure that if you have to wait any longer the last slippery pearl will drop from your hand, there are the announcements to make about the big affair next month, and several uninterested committee chairmen make uninteresting reports. It seems that nobody is working very hard for the club, and things need stirring up. This seems to be a chronic condition in

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most clubs. At last the chairman rises and says things about your fame, your experience, which, conceited though you may be, you would not even dare to think about yourself, and then you are introduced. That opening story of yours doesn't sound so funny to you as it once did, but it goes big because your audience is eager for a chance to laugh.

If you have it in you to hold the interest of men with your voice and your eye, you make a hit. If, better still, you really know something about something and tell it simply and well, your speech is a success. If you have both, you are a real orator.

The Modest Lad at the Rear Table

But whatever the outcome may be, you have had one sweet consolation all the way through the long period before the speech began, for back somewhere in the room there is a very young man just getting his start in business, and his rapt gaze is fixed on the head table and on the orator as he thinks of the glorious day when he too shall become old enough to sit at the head table and perhaps even make a speech. Just then you wonder how anyone ever can want to make a speech.

You know that the adoration in this boy's eyes is for the orator as he imagines him and not for your

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personal self, but you love him just the same and determine that to-day he shall not be disappointed if you can help it. So, strangely enough, the determination to please the humblest member of your audience is the thing that pulls you through and lets you recover your scattered pearls.

If you keep that lad's interest to the end, and know deep down in your heart that you have not disappointed him, then you know too that you have won the best reward there is in making a speech.

It is strange that about the poorest advertisers there are anywhere should be the men who prepare advertisements and the men who sell the space which advertisements fill. Yet I believe it to be true, as pointed out in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X

"Shoemaker's Children"—Some Horrible Examples

YEARS ago I saw an exhibition of physical strength by Sandow. He had two young men as his assistants and exhibits. One was strong and lively, with muscles bulging out all over him. The other was puny, weak, wizened. The one looked as if he would just naturally bounce up if he ever lay down, and the other looked as if he would fall down unless he were extremely careful. One was the shining example of Sandow's system, the other the horrible example of not cultivating physical strength.

If I were asked what kind of important business men I considered the worst advertisers, I should reply, "Publishers and advertising agents." Probably, if this is true, it is only another illustration of the old adage that shoemakers' children go unshod. Certainly farms are a great market for canned vegetables. And publishers and agents are often the horrible examples in advertising. "Eat beans?" said the farmer. "We raise 'em and sell 'em. We don't eat 'em."

I have always loved the publishing business, and

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so I have at one time and another tried to get hold of publisher's advertising. Book advertising seems to have a technique of its own. Maybe other people like it if I don't, for books seem to sell well, and I recognize there is a serious problem of waste involved in spending much money for advertising a book which may not go well. Most books are transient units in a stock subject to rapid shifts in demand.

But magazines and newspapers are permanent institutions and they repeat themselves periodically. Their owners also sell advertising space, and their representatives are very skillful indeed in telling how valuable that space is and how to use a big chunk of it, but rarely do they like to buy that same valuable space to tell their own story.

Magazines and newspapers have individuality of character. They can't help having it. They must have circulation—the greater the circulation, the higher the advertising rate and the greater the profits of the house. Competition in circulation getting has been terrific. The inside story of some circulation stunts would read like wild adventure, piracy and highway robbery.

Circulation Truth a Recent Habit

Some pretty good publishing houses used to lie like pickpockets about their circulations, giving rather

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the figures they hoped to have than the figures they actually had. Of course these figures of olden days were given out by the "rascals" in the circulation department and not by the honorable heads of the house. But admit less circulation, and how could you justify your advertising rate?

About 1905 or 1906 the Coca Cola Company put into a list of magazines a very elaborate insert, printed in colors on varnished board. This insert carried a coupon good for one five cent drink of Coca Cola at any soda fountain, the company having made arrangements with soda fountains to redeem the coupons at five cents each. These coupons looked their value—good, thick, strong coupons of the consistency of a railroad ticket.

At the time a number of these magazines were printed at a great printing plant not far from Brooklyn Bridge.

The magazines were each asked how many copies of the insert they wanted, and they ordered the coupons in quantities equal to their circulation claims rather than in quantities equal to the number of copies they were going to print. Result, there were a great number of these inserts left in the binding room after the magazines had been printed and delivered.

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These unused inserts lay around in packages until some enterprising workman cut one of the coupons out, went to the drug store and got a drink with it. This was too good a snap for a generous soul to keep to himself, and he told his friends in the plant about it and quite a commerce sprang up in bootlegged coupons.

Then someone suggested, "If the druggist can get five cents for each of these coupons, why should he not be willing to pay two or three cents apiece for them?" They tried it and found they could get their bootleg coupons redeemed for cash. Of course with such a large supply the price went down rapidly and the soda fountain men began to suspect there must be something phony about this easy money.

The Coca Cola people wondered why such entirely disproportionate numbers of coupons kept flowing in from this particular part of the East Side of New York, all keyed with the key letters of some of the high caste magazines, and they sent a sleuth to investigate. As a result some very aristocratic publishers were asked to explain why they had asked for 240,000 coupons when they only intended to use 150,000 or whatever the proportions and figures were. There were also some busy little jobs of adjustment, and some diminution of the profits of the

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transaction. Rebates were paid on the basis of actual circulation instead of claimed circulation, and then the veil of gentlemanly silence was drawn over the whole transaction and the episode passed into oblivion.

To-day the Audit Bureau of Circulation has done away with the old kind of blue sky circulation statement. To claim circulation a publication must have it. How it gets it is another matter.

Selective Values and Gross Totals

Suppose a magazine is entitled to a million circulation. That is, suppose there are a million families to which that magazine should logically go. If the magazine is well known, it will get some of these by natural selection, say 400,000 will be the kind of people who should have the magazine, while another 600,000 will be the customers who have been found somewhere and pushed, urged, and sometimes over persuaded to subscribe for or to buy it.

The 600,000 of the don't-particularly-belong class will be a rapidly shifting crowd. Next year many of them will be gone and a new half million or more will have to be found to take their places, and they will be found, for the means of adding almost any number of hundred thousands of paid circulation

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seem to be available and efficient if the cost of the job is likewise available.

The publisher naturally wishes that his whole million were all of the same kind as those obtained by natural selection. If he could raise his natural selection circulation to 600,000 and drop 400,000 of his transients and unsuitables, leaving a total of 800,000 three-fourths of whom really belonged, and if the advertiser and the agent knew just what the publisher was doing and why, the publisher would have a better and more profitable property than he had before with his million.

Such a job is one of the things that advertising could really do for him, but not the kind of advertising that most publishers use for their own story.

Since Curtis began to specialize so effectively in leadership, a gigantic circulation seems to be the hallmark of entry into Newsdealer's Hall, and anything less than a million for a weekly or a woman's magazine is admitted with shame. The question of where the million comes from or how it got there is apparently a minor matter.

Some Periodicals Are Worth Being Advertised

The same kind of white space which the publisher sells so ably and which does so much for some of his

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customers in building permanency as well as size, could do just the same thing for him if he only believed it.

But the publisher's show window of to-morrow's features is so brilliant that he must talk about that. He must feature somebody's wisdom, somebody's wit, somebody's fiction, and he thinks that this alone will do for him the job of pointing the way for natural selection. The publication is permanent, and its character in general does not change with every issue. Natural selection for a good thing can always be increased by advertising.

Change the name of the magazine and the names of the somebodies who do its fiction and features, and one big publisher's story as now told will fit almost any of his competitors. Perhaps, however, the key to the publisher's attitude toward his own advertising may sometimes be a doubt that he is entitled to a selected million, and the feeling that he must get and keep his million by forced circulation methods. Perhaps he can buy his circulation from circulation bookers more surely or more cheaply than he can buy it through advertising. If that is the case it is easy for him to see advertising as a thing which it is better for him to sell than to buy.

The same things seem to me to be true in most

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essentials of newspapers, except that the latter have decidedly more pronounced individualities. The excellencies in individuality may easily be turned into the paper's most efficient promotion force. It is that anyway, to a large extent, but most people have to find it out for themselves, and slowly. And yet to try to get a newspaper to accept and execute any advertising theme except to-morrow's news and features, or its own leadership, or (if it hasn't obtained leadership) its high per cent. of growth in advertising lines carried, is like banging your head against a stone wall.

I have a favorite paper. I have analyzed and arranged the reasons why it is my favorite paper. I have seen that paper win its way with other readers. I am sure that a constantly repainted picture of that paper's character and coloring will be effective in gradually or even rapidly increasing the percentage proportion of natural selection readers, which means building a more stable and profitable circulation with steadier upward growth and less downward flops. I have not been smart enough to make its publishers see it.

There are three principal reasons why I will subscribe for or buy a particular newspaper or magazine.

Number 1, because I like it and know I like it.

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Number 2, because I see that some others or many others like it and therefore I assume it must be good for me.

Number 3, because it is the only one available or the one I dislike least of the available ones.

My favorite paper has many of each of these three classes among its readers. The kind of advertising campaign I believe it should have is the kind that will keep steadily on the job of turning more and more members of classes 2 and 3 into class 1, somewhat regardless of how many or how few new readers it will bring in, and such a campaign must go into the character and personality of the paper even beyond to-morrow's news and next Sunday's features, important as both of these are to tell about.

"I Don't Buy It, I Sell It"

I sometimes wonder if publishers really believe in advertising. They make their living by selling it; they present incontrovertible arguments and statistics to prove its value; and yet even in the old days on *Good Housekeeping* we used to be delighted and surprised when an advertiser told us that his space in our pages was very profitable to him.

We advocated the purchase of that space. Our jobs demanded that we believe in it, and we thought we

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did. Human beings easily believe what they want to believe and try to forget the lingering doubts. Cold logic or broad-mindedness are not the best materials to make a propagandist of. A propagandist must be able to use to the utmost a belief in his cause or some good substitute for belief, like the pride of a confidence man in being smart enough to fool people.

The publishers are not confidence men. They don't have to be. Their space represents good value. They urge advertisers to prepare their advertisements well, to secure the services of a good agency and rely on that agency. Experience has proven that advice to be sound. But when they advertise themselves they are very likely to produce their own copy and turn over the placing of it to whatever agent they wish at the moment to favor by giving him a chance to make a little easy money. No obligation on either side, of course.

This is an old custom which now has some exceptions. Some publishers use an advertising agency just as other advertisers do, but even then they are often poor advertisers. It is hard for them to believe that an advertising agency knows enough about a publication to write its advertisements, and it is hard for them to persuade themselves to spend enough money to do the job. They are accustomed to seeing adver-

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tising money coming in instead of going out, and they are sometimes compelled to use rival publications as their mediums. In that case they virtually swap space. Perhaps, too, they think they know the advertising agent too well to have faith in him.

Who Doctors the Doctor?

Why are advertising agents such poor advertisers? When Dr. Jones' child is sick, he is likely to call in Dr. Smith to treat him. Advertising agents do not do that. Just possibly it might be better for them if they did.

When you know the field, it is rather an intriguing picture to imagine Erickson Co. being called in to prepare art and copy and place some advertising for Frank Seaman Co. The agent would have to study the client's business and might learn some valuable secrets. The normal relation of agent and client would hardly work out here, so long as an agency feels that it has some excellences of methods which others have not yet accepted or adopted. If one agent's methods are good, the other fellow learns them and adopts them very quickly. Advertising itself is interesting gossip about products. Of course the advertising business is a gossipy business.

Perhaps if one agent were a client of another, both

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might be benefited by an exchange of trade secrets, or, as is more likely, they might find that their secrets were not secrets at all. The habit which agents have acquired of getting acquainted with and understanding each other has done much already, not only for them but for advertising.

Sure it is, however, that the problem of advertising an advertising agency is very different from most of the jobs which the agency works out.

The publisher's market (on circulation) is the same as that of the average commodity manufacturer. The advertising agency market is limited to the larger advertisers.

Unused Values in the Trade Press

The agent's natural medium seems to be in the trade papers for advertisers, managers and sales promoters. And here again is a difficulty. The advertising agent as a rule has not, until comparatively recently, regarded the trade papers with any too much favor. This ancient state of mind has been changing rapidly, but even yet the agency has not acquired the same familiarity with the strength and scope, the real values and how to get them, of the trade press that he has acquired with general mediums.

Two reasons for this have been that the relatively

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small circulations of trade papers and the low cost per page of space have not offered the brilliant opportunity of massed attack on the public which the combined millions of a few big circulation weeklies and dailies can offer, and the thought, which many agents have held, that the dealer is influenced only by consumer advertising. In the past the trade press has been much undervalued by many advertising agents.

Again, though he is loath to admit that it is an argument against his use of any medium which is truly valuable to his client, the agent will lose money in putting advertising in a small paper if he does it on the same basis as that on which he places advertising in a great magazine. If he places a page in a magazine with a \$2,000 rate, he has a differential of \$300 to cover cost of writing copy, art visualization, ordering, checking, billing, etc., and his necessary profit. At the same rate of compensation he would have only \$30 to do all these things for a trade paper page costing \$200, and the agency expense might easily be equal to that involved in handling the \$2,000 page.

Now that the agent has begun to recognize trade paper importance, he is learning how to do his own

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trade paper advertising better, for in many cases, if his copy production ability were judged by that alone, he wouldn't cut much of a figure. There are of course some notable exceptions to these statements. Some agencies long ago began to take notice of the advertising values in trade paper space, also of the fact that trade papers have been quietly active in selling their own space, and in starting many new and important advertisers on their advertising road.

If more publishers and more advertising agents learn to advertise themselves well, those who already do it well will undoubtedly get more for their money. It is the mass of *good* advertising in any line that makes individual advertising more effective. If twenty advertisers talk interestingly about soap, it makes the whole subject of soap more interesting to advertisement readers. So far it has been rather bore-some for the advertising agent to try to read the advertisements in the advertising trade papers.

Some More Horrible Examples

Publishers and agents are not the only examples of horrible advertising. There are some advertisers who make large appropriations and announce them with a blare of trumpets and then almost immediately

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begin to curtail and cancel. They seem to get a great glow of promotion fervor from appropriating a large sum, and then another glow of thrift fervor by not spending more than a quarter of it. The only thing they don't get is the power of the advertising they fail to run. It is surprising how many of these chaps there are, and how, perennially, the advertising agent hopes that at last the appropriation will stick.

Another horrible example is the man who can afford to take the time and money to play out the course, but stops in six months or a year because he has not won as much as he expected in a time too short to prove anything about the value of advertising to him.

Still another is the man who is unable to time and tune his advertising to harmonize with his sales work, who gets a campaign going and in the midst of it throws away its value by changing his model or altering his sales policy over night. There are many of these, too.

The agency man does not like to talk about the horrible examples that come into his family. He tries to keep a high board fence around the agency graveyard. And when a new client comes in he rejoices and fears at the same time, for he does not know whether to prepare for a wedding or a funeral.

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Copy policy has been a source of constant warfare. Human nature often makes a man feel that when he has succeeded with a particular method, that proves that it is the best method for everybody. Such ideas have created all kinds of wars, including the one whose history is roughly sketched in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI

The War Between "Show Me" and "General Publicity"

I BELIEVE John Kennedy was the first personally advertised field marshal in this battle. At any rate, the battle became a conspicuous one through the use of his name and that of Claude Hopkins as the great apostles of the Reason Why type of copy, coming from an alleged scientific method of writing advertisements.

Many others have imitated or adopted this method, which is based on the logic of giving the reader the real and practical reasons why he should buy the article advertised, the theory being, and it is essentially a fine one with reference to articles of utility, at least, that a straightforward statement of fact will effect more sales than a "flossy," emotional or decorative statement. If you must have a "flossy" statement get your client to "floss up" his wares first. Sometimes, though, the apparently sweeping effect of pure snobbery in copy makes us wonder if straight-

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forward listing of honest virtues is as effective as it ought to be. It is strange that such a simple and obvious principle as the value of stating facts, should be involved in rather bitter controversy with such another simple and obvious principle as the value of being entertaining and creating a pleasant feeling of good will.

With the original debunked Show Me style of copy, simplicity of appearance was typical, illustrations being rarely used except to picture the product itself when that was necessary. Thousands of such advertisements appeared and many still appear. Not everybody, though, has been able to write that style of copy quite as profitably to themselves and some advertisers as Kennedy and Hopkins did.

For a time this type of copy was extensively advertised, and one of its authors was exploited as the highest salaried copy writer in the world, or something like that, the man whose writing was the last word in advertising skill. To me it has always seemed that any last word in a progressive art could be nothing short of delusion.

Hopkins proved himself an able writer more than once. We assume, however, that any failures which may have been associated with the products he wrote about have not been exploited to the extent that some

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of the conspicuous successes were, and if his work is to be judged impartially, those failures are an important part of the evidence. And Hopkins' work should be judged impartially, because he has claimed so much and so much has been claimed for him as an authority on advertising copy, and because most of us freely grant that he is a powerful advertisement maker.

Of course we on the outside do not know who writes any particular advertisement which comes from a particular agency, but we can recall two extensive campaigns which came from one agency. One was the campaign featuring Goodyear Tires at ten per cent. oversize, the other was the campaign advertising Jiffy Jell. The former was an obvious success. But what became of Jiffy Jell?

Room for Many Styles of Copy

We are in the midst of a progressive development. The art of advertising will be a much finer art in 1938 than it is in 1928.

Very few great writers have fancied themselves as the discoverers of "scientific principles" of writing. It is hard to see how a man of good mental poise with a reasonably temperate and appreciatively humorous ego can do that. But there is something about

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the so-called Show Me or Reason Why method of operation which makes each of its disciples feel that the final law for excellent copy production is right within his grasp. This gives him a debater's advantage over the man who is working for the less tangible but often tremendously valuable thing which might be called favorable opinion or prestige, that thing which has worked such wonders, for example, for the Cadillac car.

The Show Me writer has another advantage, in that simplicity of style is compelled by his theory. He does not always achieve simplicity. Few can. There are many skilled in ornamentation to one master of simplicity. Arthur Brisbane uses the simplest and most easily understood words he can find, an art in which he has few equals. When such an art is used with important facts or ideas we have a great writer.

Every advertising man at some time or other gets involved in the continuous battle between "general publicity" and "show me," those two schools of copy which have at times made parties in advertising something like the Republican and Democratic parties in politics, with really not any more essential differences between their aims and methods than exists between the aims and methods of Republicans and Democrats. Of course it is possible to be a mugwump

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and vote for a good man if by chance one is put up by either party. If people didn't love band wagons so well there would be more mugwumps.

The "show me" battle was originally a contest to demonstrate higher values in the space of some magazines as compared with others.

Ye Noble Knight Yclept "Cost per Inquiry"

In my magazine visits to New England I used to call on two mail order advertisers, Daniel Low and Company and Baird-North Company. Both were at Salem at one time, and, if I remember correctly, the whole mail order business of these two houses started through Daniel Low making a success of selling a Salem witchcraft souvenir spoon by mail.

These two houses were considerable advertisers for those days, particularly just before Christmas, and through them some of us got our first idea of what Show Me meant in advertising, as well as how hard it was even for an eloquent magazine representative to buck up against Cost per Inquiry and keep the business when that cost got too high. Cost per Inquiry is field-marshal of the Show Me army. Mr. Hussey of Baird-North was a very pleasant gentleman, but if your magazine had cost too much per inquiry the previous year, you might expect a

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courteous but firm refusal to use it again this year.

If a page in a magazine cost \$2.00 and brought 200 inquiries, then the cost per inquiry was \$1.00 each. If, of these 200 inquiries, 100 brought sales and the average sale was \$1.00, then the cost per sale was \$2.00, and it seemed logical to say that the use of the magazine had not been profitable. At a cost of \$2.00 to make each \$1.00 sale it was hard to see the profits. As a loyal representative of your magazine you hated to lose the business, both because it meant one important order less and because it set your magazine in the bad light of being less responsive than some others.

Of course you tried to hold the business. You said all you could, but you could not do your best while old Cost per Inquiry sat on the judge's bench. About all that you could say was that you felt quite sure your magazine would do better this year, it was gaining circulation and influence very fast, and that sort of thing.

Here General Publicity, the general influence of advertising in a high class monthly, was right smack up against Show Me in the shape of recorded Cost per Inquiry, even though \$2.00 cost for a \$1.00 sale might really be profitable if it made a regular steady customer who repeated often enough.

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To another type of advertiser we might say, "You don't want sales by mail or costs per inquiry. Our magazine will send a good class of customers into the stores which sell your products, our magazine will give you very high class general publicity"; and if we did the job of talking well enough, we would get the business or keep the business, as the case might be. Many an advertiser has profited by using high class publicity mediums even when they showed up very poorly on the basis of replies or orders by mail. Direct response, by mail, from a publication is only one of several important criterions of its advertising value.

The mail order advertiser, with his habit of checking up on tangible results was and still is a thorn in the flesh of those publications which do not seem to go to a very large proportion of mail order buyers or produce a large return of coupons or cause many requests for catalogues or samples.

A Perpetual Tournament of Noble Knights

Show Me and General Publicity are still tilting to see which has the most powerful lance and the faster steed. And every little while some champion of one side or the other rides into the lists clad in shining armor. Sometimes it has a rather tinny clank. In some

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form or other these tilts will be staged fifty years from now.

Hopkins proved to be a big man. Reason Why copy seemed to be very effective, and the battle was shifted to some extent from a contest of magazine space values to the ability of one agent to write better pulling copy than another. By pulling we meant bringing in mail inquiries as tangible signs of consumer interest, or getting noticeable and sometimes measurable action in retail stores as a result of local newspaper insertions.

Show Me and General Publicity are enemies only in the minds of propagandists or enthusiasts for exact information about inexact or indeterminate matters.

In late years Show Me has taken several forms, one of which is the idea of letting the consumer write his own advertisements.

We had on the Batten copy staff an able writer, a part of whose previous experience had been as advertising manager of a firm which produced fancy leathers for use principally in shoes.

It was inevitable that a young man as able and as earnest as he, particularly one whose ancestry was from the thrifty and practical north lands of Europe, should be a zealous seeker for bed rock facts regarding costs and values in advertising. Then, too, his

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experience had been with a product which was handled in such a way (a raw material it was) that it was difficult to determine advertising values with any accuracy. The young man was a student of his work, of causes and effects, and very anxious to get a measuring stick for advertising values. He had an objective mind and didn't like to deal with intangibles. He felt that he must have his measuring stick. It was inevitable, too, that he should believe in the existence of fundamental laws of cost and value in copy and become an ardent searcher for those laws.

This man just had to become a Show Me or Reason Why partisan. He developed convictions on the subject and had the courage to fight for them in a rather unfavorable environment.

He had the idea of letting the consumer write or choose the copy which goes to the consumer, a brilliant idea but missing somewhat the point that a skilled writer can write better copy for the public than the public itself can.

This man would write, say, ten advertisements of what he considered diverse appeal, and send them, say, to thirty people, asking each to state what advertisement appealed most strongly. Then he would take the few which received the highest number of votes and prepare a campaign along the line of these,

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or maybe prepare ten or twenty or thirty headlines and opening paragraphs, put them to a similar test, and discard all but those receiving the highest votes. Then he would use the winning headlines and opening paragraphs in every advertisement in the series, using variations of other paragraphs, and see which advertisements seem to pay the best by testing them in different cities. Then, keeping all his complicated test records straight, he felt that he had given the public just the advertisements which the public wanted, and that his agency could boast of a new, infallible, never-miss style of copy writing which is sure to appeal to the public because it came from the public. He wanted to feel that he was working by a system under which one could not go wrong. He had found his measuring stick.

He went so far as to think that nothing mattered much in the text except the opening paragraph. He would use his tested opening paragraph in each of a series of advertisements and care very little what variation there was in the other paragraphs. The public had already endorsed his opening paragraph.

What You Don't Know is Easy to Tell

Really the public had little if anything to do with it. Even the people who selected the "best" para-

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graphs or headlines read them self-consciously, acting consciously as judges and not at all in the way people read advertisements normally. People show their real judgments of advertising, not by expressed opinions, but by whether or not they are interested in buying the advertised goods.

Comparatively few people have the slightest idea how advertisements affect them, but though they don't know, they will gladly tell you if you ask them. Some people think that advertising does not affect them at all, when their homes and their pockets are full of advertised articles.

But think what a fine thing it has been for this young writer to have had that idea, to have worked at least one thing out to its logical conclusion and even beyond. Think how much nearer he can always come to writing popular advertising because of the study of people and their reactions to advertising which he has made. He has enthusiasm. He has done at least one of the things that make enthusiasm practical. He has experimented on his own notions and he is a very able copy man.

There are many fads, extravagant ideas, crazy notions, absurd formulæ in advertising, more now, I believe, than ever, but is not that true of the science

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of medicine, is it not true of art, of fiction, of legislation? In fact, is it not true of all those arts and sciences that are most alive? Progress habitually moves with many false starts down blind alleys, but after it learns to move it may learn to move wisely.

The strife between Show Me and General Publicity shows what funny ideas of being shown some people really have.

We were trying to work out a big idea for graphic presentation of the purchasing power of a magazine of immense circulation. The suggestion was made that this graph should not look like a graph but should be one. Large and small circles, pyramids, bags of wheat, etc., were to be barred. Some serious thinking was to be done for the discussion which was to follow a few days later.

When the inevitable conference was held, one man suggested the idea of showing a postman on his beat; this postman was to be dressed in colonial costume, and the headline and text were to show that if a postman had started at the time of George Washington's inauguration to deliver one edition of this circulation, he wouldn't have finished his job yet. That wasn't very good and a much better graph came out of the discussion later, but a serious-minded copy man said

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that the postman idea was impossible to use because a postman wouldn't live that long and everybody knew it.

The graph which was selected has been used for several years with great success, but nobody has ever thought of McCall Street as a graph. Yet it is a graph, although a romantic, poetical graph, and decidedly a Show Me graph.

Isn't that what Show Me means? Show me in any of the many ways that will interest me, intrigue me, give me pleasure in learning something. Sometimes it may be exact specifications which will do that, sometimes a fairy tale may do it better.

A very practical advertiser who likes to be shown and who believes in practical advertising looks back with the keenest pleasure to some advertisements which showed the wild quail on the roof of his factory in winter time. Sentiment is immortal. Efficiency is inefficient when it tries to kill sentiment.

Perhaps we have a new argument in favor of old General Publicity in the story of those who have been extending people's acquaintance with their firm names and achieving such widespread good will through the use of radio. The subject of radio is treated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII

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A Village Unprepared for the Flood

RADIO has presented a floodlike movement. This flood has swept into the village called Advertising and found the inhabitants unprepared to cope with it. It has shown advertising men that they need a speedier adjustment of their thoughts than the natural inertia of a settled industry likes to make. Sometimes the substantial men in an industry adjust themselves a little more slowly than the lightweights do. But the advertising agent now knows that he must take radio into account because the people have given it such an intimate and personal place in their daily lives.

Radio is Individual Appeal

We think of radio as mass appeal. We get so many figures about the great hookups, about the number of millions who listen in to the story of a fight or a political convention, that we think of a radio audi-

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ence as a vast assembly, subject to all the emotions described to us by crowd psychology.

That is just the opposite of what it is. It is rarely that more than a very few listen in together. The radio audiences are made up of single family groups. The manufacturer's broadcasting unit is treated as a family guest by the people who turn their dials to listen. If they like the guest they invite him into their homes the next week and the next. If they do not like him it is splendidly easy to keep him out. All this is a real and important element in understanding the peculiar power of radio broadcasting as a publicity force. No other medium is quite like it. No individual page in a magazine or newspaper can do just what a half hour of broadcasting does. Of course the page can do some things which the broadcasting cannot do. Perhaps it is the attempt to see the similarity between types of mediums rather than their essential and important differences which has kept so many advertising men from understanding radio values. We like to find that the new thing is like the thing we already knew about, but radio isn't like a magazine, newspaper or bill board.

One of the greatest of radio values lies in the fact that it is an abiding mystery, a never ending surprise. The early part of the twentieth century has produced

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two of these genii which have become familiar to our daily lives without losing their quality of mystery. They are the perfected automobile and the radio.

It is impossible to over-appreciate the development of internal combustion as it has effected highway, aerial and water transportation and equally impossible to over-appreciate what radio is giving to the world. When we sit in our American homes and listen to the striking of Big Ben in its tower in London we gasp with wonder, but try as we will we cannot comprehend the magnitude of this magic thing which has become our own.

To the advertising man radio came with a mixture of deep and even shockful impressions. First as a man he marveled with all men at this great thing. Then as an advertising man he had somewhat of a feeling of dread, of fear lest his routine should be upset by a new force in advertising. He saw radio as an instrument which he must patiently study in order to learn to use it. He didn't know how to go about that study nor where he might find competent teaching. It was a case of trying to learn a new thing from past experiences with other things which were unlike it. For radio was so obviously a means of communication that it was equally obviously destined to be a medium of advertising.

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The hard-working advertising man looked a bit askance at this new medium. Even now some of them say with a mixture of pride and shame, "I haven't fallen for a radio yet." But they know they must, and they try to think they are waiting for a "better tone" or a perfect battery elimination. Theirs is the common fear of being swept along by an overwhelming force.

For a time the majority of advertising men, fearing radio, thought it might be a detriment to their industry, refused to meet it halfway or even quarter way.

Weren't There Mediums Enough?

They felt that periodicals, public vehicles, outdoor boards, mail matter of infinite variety, were proven forces. Why should their clients wander into unproven fields and trust their public exploitation to a spoken word? A spoken word vanishes anyway the moment after it is uttered. "Go slowly." "If it proves to be good, you can take it up later. Let someone else do the costly experimenting." A quite natural conservatism, which, like almost all brakes on progress, was based on fear of the unknown, based too on the fact that advertising men had not the faintest idea of how to harness and use this force. Radio broadcasting

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was a new art, of which they had learned none of the technique.

When the People Pipe, Business Dances

The public, on the other hand, made radio their own almost instantly. A competent force of mechanics and electricians sprang up over night. All the public needed to do was to install a wire and experiment with turning little dials.

Then again, advertising had long been educating the consumer into a tremendous respect for himself as one who had some dollars to spend. Advertisements have spoken to us often and so flatteringly about how important we, the consumers, are, that we regard any great invention as our birthright. Not only that, but we must have all possible and impossible improvements of it right away. Scientists, engineers, men of money, public officials, all scramble post-haste to get these things for us. So it has been with radio.

We do not take time to absorb the wonder of radio before we get impatient to have radio sets which can be hooked to our electric light plugs, and which will entail no burden on us of anything except pressing one button and turning one dial. If a trace of static is left we think we have not had fair treatment.

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When we get the radio set we just pick up what it catches from the air with the same feeling of ownership that we have in picking a flower from our own garden. We almost call the inventors stupid because we can't stop at the store and buy a cheap television set immediately.

Who Pays the Piper?

Who pays for all this music, oratory and education? We should worry! We just get it. It has to be good, too, or we register a complaint. If we don't like it we feel injured just as we do when it rains on a holiday. The advertiser has the privilege of paying for our instruction and amusement over the air just as he has when we have it on paper. Make no mistake. It is a real privilege, and the radio-advertiser who recognizes it as such is the one who will get the most out of it.

The daring explorer appeared as soon as radio got started. This time he was the daring advertiser, but he was like the first man who ate an oyster, or the first who dared to cut his whiskers off. Would the oyster digest? Would the separation of a man from his beard sap his strength? Would the speaking of his name over the air make friends for the explorer or would he lose his money?

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We do not know who the Columbus or Lindbergh of radio advertising was. We do know that a number of such benefactors have followed him.

Our complete business system is becoming more and more benevolent. This is too big a theme to discuss here, but in passing just think of the extent to which every service for the comfort and pleasure of the people is financed by industrial enterprise, partly by tax, partly voluntarily. Think of our hospitals, amusement parks, athletic fields. Remember what we expect to get for a trifle in the contents of our periodicals, our daily papers. We have a long established standard of what we expect in the big weeklies which we buy for five cents including newsboys' profit, even though it costs twenty-five or thirty-five cents to manufacture that weekly. The editor provides us with the best in entertainment, education, humor. The advertiser makes it financially possible for him to do so.

The revenue which supports our radio broadcasting comes from advertisers. At first no broadcasting stations could make a profit or even begin to pay expenses. Why so many of them stuck to it can be explained only by the fascination of the thing itself and the hope of finding a way to secure the necessary revenue to continue working with it.

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Pioneers Blazing a Hard Trail

It may not be amiss to speak a word of appreciation of those who have made broadcasting constant, reliable, and at least prospectively profitable. Through the energetic work of four great companies in particular we have this husky adult of only a very few years' growth. Those companies are Radio Corporation, General Electric, Westinghouse and American Telephone and Telegraph. The latter company did much to establish the high quality of broadcasting and insure an income from it, and then turned its broadcasting experience over to the newly formed National Broadcasting Company.

Make no mistake about this. The present condition of radio broadcasting didn't just happen. Realize, too, that not only have marvelous jobs of engineering been performed quickly, but at the same time a new type of entertainment has been developed and has arrived at an equally amazing state of progress. These radio pioneers deserve high places in the world's Hall of Fame; inventors, engineers, impresarios, announcers, performers, all have seemed to arrive over night at maturity in the skill with which they do their work, notwithstanding the lack of experience and precedents with which they started.

Radio is an expensive thing to handle and it had

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to be backed by wealthy firms. These firms opened broadcasting stations, either for the sake of experimentation, as in the case of the American Telephone and Telegraph, or as a house advertising medium, as in the case of newspapers and department stores. They all placed their bets on science and world progress and of course were entitled to win.

Now we have "Time for Sale" over great networks of broadcasting stations, and many advertisers buy that time, secure musical or humorous talent, for a weekly hour or half hour of entertainment given with their best wishes and kindest regards. It is a perfectly transparent effort to buy good will, and because it is so honestly transparent it is successful. When it is apparent that people try to please us, we like them for it and just naturally encourage them to do it some more.

So thoroughly filled are some of us with subconscious veneration for the old and with resistance to the new that many said, "Oh, radio is the toy of the moment; there are already signs that people are getting tired of it."

Don't Wait for a Good Thing to Die

I remember a friend giving me a bitter tirade some fifteen years ago on the curse of the automobile, a

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rich man's toy which people who couldn't afford it mortgaged their homes to get. Its vogue was bound to fade, and it would slip back into what it had been at first, an expensive plaything to be owned by the wealthy few. Sometimes now we wish that had been the case (that is, provided we could keep our own cars). Then we might get enough space to drive in on the street.

The telephone is still alive, so is the phonograph, so is the moving picture, so is the reproducing piano. Radio will live longer than any of us will, and if under that name it ever dies it will be because of the birth under a different name of some improvement on itself.

I know of no more hopeless task than that of waiting for some invention of revolutionary importance to die, or of a business man waiting for a competitor who has outstripped him to stumble and cripple himself with his own speed. For the business man in that fix the only thing is to gird up his loins and get some speed himself, just as it is for those industries which fear that radio is going to hurt them. A newspaper man, for example, acts and feels quite differently about radio according to whether he considers radio and newspapers to be bitter enemies or twin brothers.

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Advertising Radio Sets

My personal experience with radio advertising has been on both sides; with the advertising of receiving sets, and with the agency handling of the broadcasting of the Clicquot Club Eskimos.

The experience with the advertising of receiving sets was brief but interesting while it lasted. Our client had been a well known manufacturer of sets and tubes. The firm's name was that of a distinguished inventor. We prepared some advertising, and I am so prejudiced in its favor as to be very proud of it as advertising; but it never had a real chance. Competition was keen, for one thing, and some of the competition showed more ability to sell. And we never knew how soon the model we were advertising would be thrown into some job-lot sale to make way for another model. About the time we could hope to make an impression on the trade and the public, the model which we featured would be cast aside and we must shout about something else. Before we could really emphasize the tonal virtues of the crystal detector, the crystal detector was out, supplanted by the more reliable tube detector. The market was in a hectic state. Old models of various makes were offered at prices below cost. The public was expect-

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ing revolutionary inventions, and many were waiting for the grand new products which gossip was always predicting.

It was a tragedy to Gail Murphy and myself, because we were looking for the development of a great account and spared nothing of time or energy to do great work on it. We thought that most of the competitive advertising at that time was poor, and we were all for doing a monumental job. We could rarely get the ear of the sales and advertising manager except after business hours, so we deserted our families and ate our dinners any old time. We would fight for a policy and its immediate execution, but nothing would happen.

The chief executives of this manufacturing firm were also engaged in other kinds of business, and this business lacked that driving, concentrated management which it needed to put it in the front rank of producers of radio instruments and tubes. It already had the magic name of a great inventor, it had the good will of many who owned and used the excellent sets which had been made before, and the field was wide open.

Some of the men in control seemed to be particularly interested in law suits, patent rights and damages. Stock values seemed much on their minds as

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well. Murphy and I harped on the greater and more permanent profits of making good sets and tubes and selling them in constantly growing volume. There may be money to be cleaned up on patent litigation, but there is always more money to be had when trains of empty freight cars keep backing up the siding to your warehouse doors and rush away full of product to fill orders. This does not need to make one careless about getting full value from his patent rights, either, and certainly should make it easier to get and to pay the best attorneys.

When the advertising agent wants goods to be made and sold more than the manufacturer himself wants to make and sell them, the agent generally loses the account. We lost this one.

Trying to Be an Impresario

Kimball of Clicquot Club called me up some time later and asked me what I thought of broadcasting for Clicquot. I had my very serious doubts, but that made no difference to him as he had decided to do it anyway, and I had to try to learn the broadcasting art. Harry Reser's Orchestra was secured and named the Clicquot Club Eskimos. I was responsible for the copy.

Here was a new copy problem. Instead of the art

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of brush or pencil we had the art of music to work with, and the copy must both fit that art and present in a plain but unobtrusive way the fact that this music was sponsored by the Clicquot Club Company. And that was about all. High board fences of restriction were placed around the copy to protect the sacred good will of WEAf and associated stations. The broadcasting companies have to be very careful as to what they will let their clients say about their products over the air.

If this broadcasting became insistent advertising, the listeners in might get bored and tune out. As an advertising man of publication antecedents I wanted more advertising, consequently I had many friendly arguments with the people at WEAf as to what was good copy over the radio and what was not. One way to learn how to coöperate is to fight it out far enough to learn how and why and where to coöperate.

At first I thought all this "sacred good will" was bunk. People had proven that they liked to read advertising. Why wouldn't they like to hear it? I forgot that publishers had experimented carefully for decades to learn what their readers would accept in the way of advertising, and that radio had this same problem for a very different medium.

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Here is a new industry and a very delicate type of medium. The listener in must be treated most carefully, because he can light a cigar in the middle of Dr. Cadman's sermon and if he does not like what the good doctor says he can turn off and say, "Well, I guess that's about enough church for to-day." He can do the same thing with any of the entertainment features, whether they are sponsored by somebody's advertising or not. Broadcasting without listeners in is like dropping money in the middle of the ocean.

Charles Stewart Parlin, Director of Research for the Curtis Publishing Company, had a very remarkable analysis of American business which he gave in public speeches. No one who ever heard it can forget his eloquent peroration, "The consumer is king."

That was the idea of WEAf and the others. "If we make errors, we shall try to make only the kinds which shall not antagonize the great Air Public. If we must lose any good will, let us lose that of our advertisers and their agents before we lose that of our listeners in." A sound policy. It has shown splendid results. Their attitude toward advertisers was, "We want you, but we must insist that you neither bore nor offend the listener in."

I believe that this policy has already made a great medium of broadcasting. I have swung over to this

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view so completely as to fear lest the pressure of business to have more sales talk in broadcasting may become too strong to be resisted. The more I saw how broadcasting worked to bring good will, the more I saw how unnecessary and even dangerous it might be to spoil a musical program by inserting advertising specifications about any product; in fact, how very different broadcasting is from publication advertising, and how they may help each other without competing with each other, except, of course, on the point of relative proportions of the advertising appropriations.

The Most Delicate of All Copy Jobs

It is a delicate job to prepare good copy for the very brief sentences which accompany an hour of broadcasting. We must forget the sale of the product and think only of making friends by giving the listeners in a good time. We must be careful to do the things which will give all of them a good time, realizing that one man's idea of a good time may not be another's.

The copy must not bore. It should add to the interest of the program and should always sound as if the announcer liked to say it. The announcer is a person of great importance to the success of a broad-

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casting period. Copy should be adapted to him, just as it is to different types of publications.

I have felt that the general trend in air copy has been a bit too "mushy," too obviously careful, too artificially jolly. But it is still a new art. Perhaps more people like that type of superficiality than I am inclined to think do. I feel that the experienced broadcasting companies have at least tried to keep away from it. Carefully planned speech which has the effect of spontaneity is a difficult thing, I realize, and calls for the very highest type of copy men for radio.

The great master of broadcast announcing, Graham McNamee, gives the impression of great virility and ready wit in his manner of announcing. I imagine McNamee has talked to more people than has anyone else in the world, for while the President of the United States and a few others have some of these great audiences on the big hookups once in a while, Graham has had them all a good many times. His voice is ideal for broadcasting; so is that of his side partner, Phil Carlin. These two make a wonderful team. As you listen to them you wonder how they gather the words to say so much so fast and yet so clearly. There is a smoothness in McNamee's diction which indicates that words come to him as a

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natural expression of what he sees and thinks. Like the work of a master pianist, there seems to be no conscious labor in it. Some other announcers always seem to be working hard; you can almost hear them groan at their task.

There is no novelty to me in listening in. I know pretty much how the wheels go round, and yet in listening in on McNamee's announcing of the second Tunney-Dempsey fight I could hardly stand the strain of it. I had to get up and pace the floor, rush for a drink of water, light innumerable cigarettes, and do all those funny things which mean intense nervous strain. Though I was at my own home, I saw that fight.

Artistic Prattle

At this same fight the broadcasting began long before the fight began, and Phil Carlin had to kill time for a half hour or more. His was the simple little job of keeping several million people contented while they waited for the fight to begin. All he could do was to prattle. People didn't want a lecture or a concert or a speech at that time, they only wanted to hear about a fight which had not yet begun. Carlin's prattle was immense. It was interesting, chummy, human, a

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job that not one in ten thousand could have done; and when the big news came at last Carlin retired. I wonder how many of the millions of listeners appreciated either the difficulty or the splendid quality of this most important prattling.

It is a treat to watch Graham McNamee when he is announcing a musical program. At the old downtown studio Graham would announce the next number, rush out to the reception room, greet a friend or two, listen in at the reproducer there, rush back, push the mike a little closer to the banjos or a little further from the trombones, rush out again to see if that went better, and then get back to announce the next number. With every nerve a-tingle and every faculty under perfect control, he impersonates radio itself with its high tension and yet producing its effect with calm exactitude.

Listening to McNamee, Carlin, Morgan, Roxy and the others taught me that if possible the text of the copy should be adapted to the personality of the announcer chosen. Maybe some day this can be done. Certainly all splendid announcers suggest different personalities, and different personalities suggest different methods of approach. Morgan's rotund voice may suggest eloquent oratory, for example, Mc-

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Namee's may suggest sparkling conversation, and Roxy's a sympathetic intimacy of thought and feeling.

Chumminess via the Postman

Music has become an important advertising medium. If you doubt this, get Clicquot Club Company or some other broadcaster to show you samples of thousands of letters from listeners in, telling you how much they liked last night's Eskimo hour, or what they wish the Eskimos would play next week, or how they think it only fair to the firm which gives them so much pleasure every week to have the ginger ale on tap while they listen in.

These letters are great fun. "Will you please settle a bet? Is it a real dog which barks when you play Clicquot?" "Is Reser a real Eskimo and is that a real Eskimo name?"

Of course these things shouldn't be said out loud, but Reser was born in Ohio and the Eskimo dog's bark is made by Tommy Stacks with a tin can, a piece of drumhead skin, a string, and a resin-covered rag. I know all these things, and yet I feel the dog sled every time these boys tune up.

Sometimes a man, generally a poor man, sends a small check with which he wants the boys to have a

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little treat, cigars or something. "Dick Deadeye," from Brooklyn, writes a splendid long letter of romping nonsense, quite good enough to be published. Certain enthusiastic women write chatty, friendly letters almost every week. Radio is a great booster for the United States mail.

In the same mail may come a letter from a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology telling how much he appreciated last Tuesday's Eskimo hour; a letter from a little girl saying that on Tuesday nights she is allowed to stay up late because she loves the Eskimos so much and what is the name of the dog that barks; a letter from a sales manager who says that the Eskimos are the best ever and that it only seems fair that as they listen in they should have a tall glass of Clicquot Club with ice or something else in it; hundreds of postcards asking if this or that can be played next week; letters on fine engrossed stationery, letters on cheap yellow paper, elegant letters, ungrammatical letters, and at the rate of about one to fifteen thousand a letter which says, "The music is bum, I don't like it, and never am I going to listen in on your hour again."

Eminent divines thank the broadcasters for giving clean entertainment to young and old. Gushing

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girls want photographs and autographs. Amateur composers and authors offer their stuff for broadcasting, some of it fair, some terrible. There are letters about the way people treat the World War veterans, about wayward sons and daughters and how radio keeps them in at night, about almost every conceivable thing that is human.

It is worth the price of broadcasting to get this picture of a friendly world, this tremendous, spontaneous barrage of gratitude for half an hour of bright music each week, and this intimate disclosure of personal wishes, personal likes and dislikes. As we said, the radio audience is a personal audience, not a mass audience.

Is it good advertising? Once I doubted it, but I hadn't seen those letters then. Now I think it is.

Yes, music has become a very important advertising medium, and I was surprised to find how the musicians have been preparing for it. Harry Reser, chief Eskimo, who has taught me that a professional musician may be at once a genuine artist and a high class business man as well as a charming fellow, thinks that radio not only has promoted a great musical industry but will play a big part in developing new and important music.

There is no doubt that radio has given us a most

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delightful rehearing of the fine old music which is destined to live forever.

On the advertising side there is the sponsor's opportunity to make use of all these letters, post cards, and telegrams which come rushing in to him. He may send them printed matter about his product, and thus emphasize the good will his unit has already created by giving them interesting facts about its members. One noteworthy point is that he quickly becomes more particular about the quality of his own printed matter. He is not sending it out to strangers but to acquaintances who have proven their friendliness by writing to him.

What More Will Radio Do?

Though very new, radio has become somewhat of an old story to us and we wonder what will happen to it next. Television? Of course, and soon. Bigger hookups? Certainly; it is just as easy to talk to fifty millions as to one. Education, drama, the fine arts? Already radio has done much more than trifle with these. Already several masters in these lines are concerned with what they can do with it.

We have heard of the great projected "University of the Air" which is forming its faculty by natural selection from the educators of the world. Some of

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these learned professors thought they could not possibly give a lecture in less than two hours. Now many of them have learned to give a better lecture in twenty minutes, and they love it. They may even discover for themselves that ten minutes is better than twenty.

Great plans are being made to introduce radio into the schools. Its educational possibilities there are boundless. And it is already taking a vanguard position in adult education, that extremely important phase of modern educational work.

Radio advertising copy? Improving, but still not good enough. Nor should we expect it at this stage. A few years after advertising in publications started, copy said not much more than "Buy this thing!" Many men and women with brains and vision are needed to work out this copy problem. Fine as the copy is in magazines and newspapers, it needs to be still better in radio. It must lure but never frighten away. It hasn't time for detailed explanation. It must shine or suffer eclipse.

Radio copy must be about the thing broadcasted, the music, the comedy skit, the historical drama, whatever it is that comes over the air, otherwise the copy kills its own desired effect. To achieve a legitimate blend between the name of the advertiser and

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his product on the one hand, and the delightful program on the other, is a problem in art. It can be done. It isn't yet done as well as it may be. Incongruous mixing of entertainment and product names still exists. Advertisers sometimes feel that if they pay their money they have a right to more advertising than they get. The thing is still so new that some have not yet learned the value to themselves of giving their charming programs with spontaneous freedom, reserving only the one right of reminding those who listen as to who is giving the programs.

Some radio advertisers are not yet fit to take part in this evolution. It involves generosity, give and take, desire to help others. These qualities are needed before the radio advertiser can expect to make a profit for himself, and with these qualities demonstrated, the sympathetic individuals of the air audience are glad to help him make a profit for himself.

The time may come when we can include a little more direct advertising talk in a broadcasting period, but it should not come until the talk can be handled with such artistry that no incongruity shall be apparent between itself and the featured entertainment program.

This means superb handling of radio copy. It must be entirely acceptable to those who listen in. There

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can be a quick check-up on this. The writer can know to-morrow whether or not his copy went well, whereas the writer of a magazine advertisement may not know for six months, and possibly never.

Who knows how to write it? How can the agency writer learn the essential qualities of radio copy? What group of writers can prepare five minutes of just-right copy to go with twenty-five minutes of musical entertainment and leave no raw edges, no sense of being forced?

To my mind such would be about the hardest assignment ever made to agency copy men. No wonder they shy at it. No wonder they argue with the station men about what constitutes good advertising. I know that it would be easier for me to write a thousand pages like this than one like that.

And yet I am wholly convinced that great radio copy will ultimately come from advertising agencies.

The advertiser who uses the air can well afford to postpone his five minutes of straight talk until the right person shows up to write it, for as it is, he is getting much for his money, good will to breed customers, and a very fine brand of good will with his trade. For the dealers are also listeners in at their homes, and when they really enjoy a program they realize that their customers are listening in on the

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same program and enjoying it too. There is a great family feeling engendered in this way. We hear radio in our individual family and project in our minds the great world family as well. It is a step toward that world community of understanding and friendliness which, as philosophy has always taught us, is the most important objective of humanity.

CHAPTER XIII

Are We Losing Brilliancy in Advertising?

AS I got acclimated to being an advertising executive, I felt more and more that nothing any of us did was quite brilliant enough, that we were too easily satisfied to have the client accept a fifty-candle-power piece of copy where we ought to give him at least a thousand-candle power. It is easy to consider a piece of copy "all right" when the client accepts it, but the agent should be a sharper critic of his own work than that.

The mass force, or we might even call it the stupidity velocity, of a large group made up mostly of people of mediocre intellects is apt to be more powerful than the influence of the few brilliant intellects in that group. Stupid people often work harder than brilliant ones. They have to.

A Sinister Force

Stupidity, in its own unconscious defense, is always trying to level down the average of mental

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performance and intellectual requirement. Stupidity laughs at brilliancy because it can't understand brilliancy. There is such a mass of stupid mediocrity that its loud-pealed laughter is a very destructive force. Its laughter is of that coarse character which dulls the edges of fine things, and in a crowd of its own generators makes beautiful things seem of small account. Brilliancy, on the other hand, does not laugh at stupidity but weeps over it.

This is an era of great business organizations. Even barbers, shoe shiners and quick lunch people have entered the ranks of big business. Cigar dealers and milk peddlers did it long ago.

Organization has made big business out of the advertising agency. Annual turnover of five to thirty million dollars' worth of advertising, unheard of twenty years ago, is not uncommonly heard of now. But all great organizations share a common danger, the glorification of organization itself at the expense of brilliant personal performance. This is a more serious danger to advertising than it is to the more prosaic type of business.

A dull man may become recognized as a leader and often does, by cultivating a habit of hard work, prompt attendance, and accuracy in details, in spite

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of the fact that mentally he is unimaginative, uninspiring, unaware of the tendencies of progress and the remarkable balancing power of humor.

Such a man feels that organization is with him, back of him, all around him. He fits in with the time clock, with closing dates, with appointments. He is willing to travel and behaves himself when away from home. Almost everything is in his favor except the fact that he cannot conceive or do big things, though tireless industry may cause him to do many of the small ones.

Brilliancy Has No Substitute

When we hear such phrases as mass production and straight-line production, we think of a new magic which must be applied everywhere, artistically as well as mechanically, forgetting that mass production in art will only give us bum art. That will be as true a century from now as it is now. Organization will prove a poor substitute for the creativeness of the individual. Progressive development of a great enterprise needs both.

Brilliant men are often at a discount in great industrial organizations. They are not always tame enough. Of what use is a free thinker in a church with a rigid creed? The great corporations cultivate

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mass power rather than individual power. The power these industrial leaders get from the speed of their firms more than neutralizes whatever mistakes they make. We see only their success and think they make no mistakes. If they happen to lack brilliancy themselves, they do not know how to look for it in advertising production, so their attitude invites the producer of advertising to sell them on some other basis, such as "thorough analysis of trade conditions before we write a line of advertising," which may mean something or nothing. When it is touted as an invariable rule of procedure, it generally means worse than nothing.

When an agent describes his invariable procedure, look out for him. Invariability as an agency trait is a liability. Variability, adjustability, inventive adaptability are agency virtues. The advertising business, reflecting life in all its aspects, must be a living and growing thing.

One does not need to be dull to be sensible. Advertising can never afford to be dull. The publisher sells advertising space. He has the habit of selling it through an agency and prefers to do it that way. If he is a man of taste himself he must often wish that more of the space he sells could be filled with advertisements which are a credit to his publication

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from an editorial or artistic point of view. Relatively few of the advertisements which appear are up to our present par.

My old partner, William Boardman, once had a client whose advertising manager was an able plodder and a fine and loyal fellow. He was so impressed with Boardman's brilliancy that he became a willing intellectual slave. He believed so implicitly in Boardman's wisdom that the latter had only to express an idea to have it accepted as gospel. This state continued for years. It had its obvious temporary advantages.

Once this advertising manager came to me as a friend of both and with deep distress told me that he felt sure that he had found Boardman mistaken in an idea. This was terrible, he thought; how could he ever be sure now that the man whose judgment he had idealized was right in all his ideas? It happens that Boardman, with his scintillating mind, expresses his thoughts freely, hoping for the kind of come-back in debate which will help him to discard his ideas if they are wrong or justify them if they are sound.

Brilliancy is almost always misapprehended by non-brilliant men. They are afraid of it. They either worship it blindly and foolishly, or they are jealous

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of it and eager to show up its inconsistencies. Compared with brilliancy, consistency is a piker in what it can do for the world. Consistency keeps many things going which ought to stop.

What Price Killing Yourself?

I have seen brilliant writers, brilliant art directors, come into an agency, become the prize performers for a period, be in demand by all account executives, be forced to the front as exhibits to prospects, go through a terrible grind of work because they did some things so well that they were called on to do more than they could, try in their unconscious rebellion against being forced at such a pace to disregard the time clock and get a breathing spell of late slumber, become dray horses instead of race horses, and finally move on to the next shop which offered them good salaries and dignified ranking and do the same thing over again and again. Agencies are permitting this fool thing to happen all the time.

One or two agencies fancy that they try to pay the proper money price for getting twenty years' work out of a man in two or three years. Their writers understand what they are giving and expect to "clean up" on the money end in a limited time and have enough salted away for the long period of physical

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and mental recuperation which will be necessary, if they live.

To my way of thinking, that is a damnable policy for any firm to adopt as well as an idiotic trap for any writer to fall into. Ultimately it will kill its own objective. Man killing is not good business.

There is quite a procession of fine intellects passing through one agency after another. They are not always strict conformists to the views of the organization, and occasionally they are fired because they are "not in line with the organization," as it is put. It is a sad waste of high grade material that the duration of their life in any one place is so short and unsatisfactory.

It does not take brilliancy to maintain a record of hours in the office and pieces of copy written per month. It does not take brilliancy to add figures. An adding-machine will eat and digest all the figures you can give it. It does not take brilliancy to catch the sleeper to Virginia and be in a client's office the next day, but when you get there it may take brilliancy to get a wild notion out of the client's head and get him back on the right track, or to work out with him a plan of notable advertising strategy. It does not take brilliancy to lay out some sort of passable advertising page, get an unobjectionable and unoffensive type

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layout and a pretty picture, but it may take brilliancy to lay out a page which fairly sparkles with the invitation to stop and read.

Art by the Square Foot

When an accounting or executive department head thinks of the value of art work principally on the basis that a square foot of painting ought to cost not more than one-half as much as two square feet, it is easy to see how the brilliant producer of an occasional gem of copy will not be considered "in line with the organization" as compared with the man who turns out ream after ream of passable, conventional stuff at a high profit. I believe that there are very few busy and personally industrious executives who appreciate the amount of freedom and idle time which brilliancy of thought and execution actually needs and which it may be highly profitable to finance.

The human iron is not always hot enough to spark, but if it is capable of throwing off brilliant sparks when heated, then it pays to use both patience and fuel to get that heat.

Overplayed Standards

Our standardized performances of to-day may not meet the popular style and taste of to-morrow.

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The slogan maker of twenty years ago was doing the big job in advertising in his day. His "Best by Test" or his "Absolutely Pure" or his "Hammer the Hammer" or his "His Master's Voice," put into lots of space with a simple explanation of what the slogan meant in the structure or service of a product, constituted some of the best and most effective advertising of the times.

Some of our standardized testimonial type of advertising, some of our personal vanity appeals, some of our "Now at last you can have this" type, some of our danger threat types, are already showing signs of wear and tear. Some of our newer types of art make us wonder if we shall be forced to endure a modern reincarnation of the Florentine school.

This all has a bearing on the loss of individual brilliancy in advertising agency organizations. Pure, clear, honest statement which is at the same time vivid, believable and persuading is what advertising is bound to demand if it is to endure. That may mean straightforward language or brilliant wit. It takes genius to adapt wit to effective advertising and develop its unused values there.

Brilliancy of Simplicity

That it takes brilliancy to produce interesting simplicity is pretty well known. Realism in fiction and

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drama is the field of brilliant performers. Such are needed in advertising; even some who do not obey the time clock are needed; even some who get into debt are needed, not because they do but although they do; even some who are erratic or egotistical in temperament are needed, again not because they are but although they are. If the time clock idea is put a little out of adjustment by a brilliant man, it may be that he is worth even more than such a sacred institution as the time clock.

Every agency executive is frequently in a quandary about this man or that: Is he really brilliant? How can I get the most out of him and keep him going? With all his brilliant parts, isn't he doing more harm than good? If he is really brilliant the man is probably doing more good than harm whatever the appearances. Sometimes a delicious nut has a prickly burr, and gold is valuable enough to dig deeply for. But what can you do with the management which does not recognize human gold when it sees it, and thinks of a nut as a personification of dangerous insanity?

Two men, one of the brilliant creative type and another of the practical, sensible, executive type, worked in the same shop for many years. Each had a strong but vaguely defined idea that the other was a fine and able man. No two men ever tried harder to

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understand each other, but twenty-odd years were not enough for either of them to understand the other's point of view or the motives for his actions. Ultimately the first man got out. When the brilliant creator fights it out with the practical executive, it is generally the creative man who leaves the organization.

The brilliant man is often to blame for his own state, not so much because he does not know how to conform as because he does not learn how to justify his non-conformity. But fixing blame on a brilliant man who is fired does not make good advertising out of the poorer stuff his more amenable successor may write, nor assure an able handling of clients' affairs.

Flee from Stupid Management

Again I say that the agency has the option of getting along with some brilliant men who may be hard for an office disciplinarian to handle, or to suffer a loss in quality of production. There are apparently not enough brilliant producers to go around, but there are assuredly enough counterfeits who want the jobs and will behave themselves beautifully as far as the rules of an office are concerned.

Of course whether a brilliant man belongs in any particular agency or not depends on its management.

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There is no sense in having a two-minute horse and hobbling him down to a four-minute speed. If four minutes is the highest speed the agency is capable of, the two-minute man doesn't belong there anyway.

The question might be asked, "Where are all these brilliant people to be found?" Many of them have been found and many lost, but the problem of looking for them is not so serious as the one of recognizing them when they appear. Much too large a proportion of them either eat their hearts out in the advertising business or leave the advertising business. It may be hard to substitute a soul for a time clock, but it must be done if the advertising business is to be brilliantly alive.

Anything as big and as good as advertising is likely to be the victim of its own enthusiasms. "It is so essential and so important that it can't be wrong." But advertising can go wrong, and it is important to know and admit the worst. Why, because it is a good thing, should its whole-souled zealots want to prove that it is a perfect thing? Yet, even among its most intelligent men we find a disinclination to admit any spots or stains. As a matter of fact, advertising is just a very human business, and like the church and the theater must confess its share of human faults.

CHAPTER XIV

Well, Let's Tell the Worst

WE have heard that advertising, by increasing sales and net profit, brings about improvement and economy in manufacture which result in lower costs and lower prices to the consumer. Sometimes it does. Sometimes it does not. Sometimes lower prices are a long time coming. There are other factors in industrial development which are fully as important as low prices.

The consumer must help to promote business in order to get the things promoted. He ultimately pays all the bills. I have even heard it said that nobody has to pay for successful advertising. The only answer to that statement is, "Quit kidding!"

It is very easy to deceive ourselves about the economics of advertising. The advertiser is always looking for increased turnover and increased capital to develop his business. Within reason that is good for everybody concerned. It is just what nature does each year to promote vegetable growth. Sometimes prices are put up arbitrarily to create a margin suffi-

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cient to pay for the advertising. Even this is good if it is to the advantage of the people to have enlarged opportunities for the purchase of the merchandise advertised, and if the higher prices are needed to give the opportunities. This is often the case.

It Costs to Build a Business

The fact that he can get and maintain a price differential in his favor is often given to a manufacturer as a reason why he should advertise. If it takes him out of ruinous and unprofitable competition and enables him to build a substantial business, then to that extent the special advantage is not only legitimate but good for him and for the public. A living profit and insurance of its continuation are the foundations of industry. We, the public, are willing to pay in prices for a general condition of diversified and prosperous industry, always provided it is not overdone. So we should not forget that advertising often creates upward price competition, and that upward price competition is often needed to develop an industry. Prices carrying good profits are essential for production development and for improvements.

We might just as well admit that a price once established and going well does not tend to be reduced easily, particularly if it has the strength of a

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well-known brand name to keep it up. We might just as well admit also the virtue in the new economic vision which sees a vastly greater benefit in a vigorous and promotive universal activity than can ever be found in mere cheapness.

How It Is Sometimes Done

For example, A is producing a package breakfast food. He finds that in quantity it can be packaged, modestly advertised, and retailed for 10 cents, and he makes a great success of his business.

This success excites B who realizes that A has a head start and that to overcome A's prestige will require power and speed, and that consequently he needs to finance more advertising than A or do some other thing to get his product into the limelight.

B starts out with the idea of more advertising and a 15-cent package, so that the extra nickel on each package gives him a larger promotion spread, more salesmen, special dealer inducements, bigger advertising. A nickel a package on ten million packages is five hundred thousand dollars.

He then goes to an advertising agent, who adds his contribution in the shape of the idea that this particular breakfast food has a benign effect on the human system: it is more than a food, it is a regula-

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tor, a tonic, and it is delicious as well. The agent says that he can secure the prominent leaders of society to endorse it over their own names. The usual wheels go round and the endorsements come riding in. B's new Crisprite Breakfast Food comes out with a 15-cent price and a somewhat smaller package. The new food is launched not as something which is to become the vogue but as something which already is the vogue. The advertising proves it is the vogue because the people who set the vogue are already using it and improving their health with it, as the signed testimonials in the advertisements prove.

In a very short time Crisprite is the biggest seller in the field. A is worried about it. He is afraid his agent is not able enough—why didn't he think of the plan of the testimonials? A then raises his price to 15 cents, goes into his war chest, gets another agent, and comes back full tilt into the battle to raise prices. He goes a bit further and proves that his food will really improve the condition of anyone afflicted with whatever the most popular ailment may be. Now both foods sell for 15 cents a package, and people seem to prefer these foods to the saving of the extra nickel.

C, another breakfast food man, wakes up and says to himself, "After all, business is regulated by eco-

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conomic laws and price is a most important consideration. I will come into this field with a package of full size and retail it at half price, two packages for 15 cents. I can do this and make a profit, as I shall have no advertising expense.

But when C offers his package to the dealer the latter says, "I don't want it; no demand for it." And C has hard, almost impossible going until he puts money into the hands of another clever agent. C's agent may say, "Present the finest and highest priced product on the market and make 'em take it. If your price is 20 cents, people will *know* your product is good."

Let us say that 20 cents is about the limit to which this price lifting can go. The result of all this has been the establishment of standard breakfast foods on a higher price basis than formerly. If prices are too high for the public to stand, the sale of breakfast foods will drop or new ones will come in at lower prices. If prices and volume are maintained over a period of years, it may indicate that prices could have been somewhat higher to the good of the industry.

There has been much of competition in this picture. Once it might have been competition of price. Now it is competition for public favor, with competition in quality of product implied. With all its lavish

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promotion, the method has done something to keep the wage scale up, to add to the farmer's markets as well as make the grocery business more alive.

The law of promotion, the law which says that power varies with the square of the speed, has been put into effect and more business has been done. With enough power of promotion we have been able to forget low price, but we could not forget good quality. Ultimately the quality must justify the price or the house tumbles.

These cases are not merely hypothetical. In the food field, the tooth-paste field, the soft-drink field, the field of cosmetics and toilet preparations, there are many of them.

The first thing the clever agent does is to "doll up" a package. Then, if a product hasn't a good enough best foot of its own, he borrows a best foot by unimpeachable testimonials, or by some fancied health-giving quality, or by making some rather unimportant fact seem important by prominent display, all of which are regular promotion devices—not particularly brilliant ones, either. They may seem like clever inventions of the moment, but they are as much standardized as granulated sugar.

An article of wearing apparel, inexpensive to make and easy to put on, is to be advertised. Heretofore

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nobody has realized that he wants it. Socially its standing has been a trifle below par. The agent takes it in hand, and gives his prescription: "Full pages in the leading weeklies; for copy, testimonials from the most famous stage and movie heroes." "But those people will not wear this article." "Oh, yes, they will; long enough to have their pictures taken with it on, at least." And they do, and another stunt has gone over big.

Another Illustration

When beer and liquor went out, theoretically, there were many efforts made to boost soft drinks. Some soft drinks had already created a large sale. One in particular had become a national standard. Its business was very large, its success showed a profitable and promising field. It was inevitable that others should enter that field.

I can easily picture a group of wideawakes planning the sale of a competing drink. Did they say, "Let us give a larger quantity at a lower price?" Others had done that and failed. They knew that if they did that they would have a hard climb. Instead they said, "We will give a smaller quantity at a higher price, and have a differential in our favor both ways." "But can we compete under those cir-

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cumstances?" "Easily. We'll make our bottle the right size for convenient consumption, and that will be a point in its favor. Whereas our competitor has appealed to the home trade, we can go into the hotels, cafés, and night clubs first and work from the top down. Make our earliest customers advertise us. Our only serious problem then is to raise enough money for a strenuous campaign of sales promotion and advertising, and the field is so promising that we can do that through sale of stock."

Perhaps the first manufacturer keeps his volume and increases it, and the second one adds new volume. There may be room for several big ones in that industry. An industry cannot grow without furnishing important jobs to the many people who will be engaged in the manufacture and distribution of its products.

A peculiar though rather common situation ensues. The second concern has built its business largely on the basis that discriminating buyers select that beverage. Perhaps the older manufacturer has some advantage of skill and experience in production, and he also gives more for less money. Then we have the anomaly of those who consider themselves as discriminating buyers paying more money for less quantity of a product which is at least no better. If they

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like it that way, who should complain when what calls itself the top market pays an extra price for the privilege of considering itself as made up of discriminating buyers?

"What Price Social Glory?"

There are many cases where the so-called top market people pay an extra price for adornment of a package or for a complimentary ascription of social smartness to themselves. The actual facts are available to everyone. When two products are in the open market, any buyer can make an inexpensive test of quality, quantity, and price. You cannot possibly deceive one who seriously wants to know these things, but advertising and the appearance of a package can help to build preference for one or the other. Price may enter into it too, for there are still some thrifty buyers.

Even the appeal of snobbery may not be a real grievance against advertising. Rather may it be a grievance against the people who are so foolish as to spend their money for snobbery. There are many climbers, and they like to buy even gregarious distinction. Personal distinction is a commodity that many will pay high for. A rich and generous husband will buy social position for his wife by financing a

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person of social prominence and in return having his wife entertain him or her as a house guest. It may be a fair and amiable trade. Lesser souls enjoy using the same tooth paste or face cream which a duchess is reported to use. Nobody suffers very much from these things and nothing is injured except the good repute of advertising itself when these things are overdone and falsehood is told or implied.

The public is not fooled much beyond the point where it wants to be fooled. We are a very tolerant public. We stand a lot. And the shouting reformer who lives on public grievances has to shout a little louder each year than he did the year before to earn his bread and butter. Of course over-toleration encourages abuse, and though it may take us a long time to do anything about it, we really don't like to be lied to by merchants and manufacturers, particularly when it is not necessary.

Dirty Work in the Agency

We have all seen some very beautiful and very impressive advertising of toilet preparations, bearing the pictures and signed testimonials of social celebrities. Undoubtedly these are good preparations and worthy of a large sale. But it is a fact that these testimonials are bought and sold, and that sometimes

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high prices are paid. Often we are told that the check goes to some charity of the one whose testimonial is used. There are even people who want to see their names and pictures in print who will offer the use of their names free, but such names are rarely worth using.

This kind of testimonial is a smart trick. Even the people who might suspect the spontaneity of these testimonials were glad to be influenced by them, and the uncounted multitude gobbled them up. What a privilege to Mrs. Commonplace to have on her dressing table the same cosmetics which Lady This and the Duchess of That and Madame Social Mentor have on their own dressing tables and about which they write so enthusiastically and so soulfully.

When that wonderfully human, sincere and able gentleman, Cyrus H. K. Curtis, falls for the use of his name and picture in an advertisement of beds, we have a demonstration of the climax of intriguing interest which lies in this testimonial idea. I cannot conceive of Mr. Curtis being influenced by the lure of either money or notoriety in doing this thing; but I can conceive of a cleverly devised appeal to him to contribute a little something to the every-day philosophy of living which very adroitly is turned into an advertisement for somebody's beds. We must take

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off our hats to the cleverness of the agency which does this, although I, for one, consider the influence and example of that agency to be one of the greatest dangers which advertising faces.

And here is the worst thing I know about the advertising business right now. If this kind of stuff comes from the low-grade and low-powered agencies, the little insignificant fellows, they get it by imitation. The originators and pushers of this kind of advertising are some of the largest, most respected, most envied firms in the business. Why do they do it? Because they talk to the public and the public has seemed to like it.

The responsibility lies between advertising agents, publishers and the advertisers themselves, with the attitude of the public apparently egging them on. The advertiser may say, "My business is highly competitive and I cannot sell my face cream in this way unless it is a good cream. I am only using these testimonials from society leaders to make a vivid impression. The public has so many things demanding attention that I am obliged to shout to it." And these are pretty big contracts, some of them sponsored by advertising agents who place millions of dollars with the publishers.

In my opinion this practice has been doing grave

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injury to advertising, because advertising must be believed, if those who invest in it are to profit by it to the fullest extent. The practice of exaggeration or falsehood by prominent advertisers, unchecked by the publishers who permit such statements in their columns, not only invites others to follow with the same kind of profitable deceits, but is bound to weaken the effect of advertisements which cling to the literal truth.

Why do so many of the larger publishers carry such advertising? Almost any magazine publisher will say, "the big magazines are known to be pretty particular. I guess I'd be foolish to turn down anything that runs in their columns." Well, business is not inclined to concern itself about moral laws except as their violation injures business. Industries are trying hard to be good, but every once in a while some business man finds a way to harvest a little more of a crop than the natural increment of his sowing has entitled him to.

Commerce in Coughs

When a clever man advertises that his client's cigarettes will not produce a cough in a carload, he says something which you and I, if we smoke cigarettes, know is not true. Not only that, he calls atten-

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tion to the relation between cigarettes and coughing, implying at least that other cigarettes cause more coughs than his do, a thing which of course he cannot demonstrate. And it does not add to my admiration for a friend to learn that he has passed the blindfold test. It is only the public's tolerant sense of humor that permits some of these lying campaigns to succeed. Is not that tolerance being over-worked?

Business will always be somewhat of a battle, but such a battle must have rules of business ethics. Poison gas must be barred. There should not be room in the same periodicals for straight truth and false implication.

Any snob appeal gets very tiresome after a while and we all get together and chuck it out. I think that a great agency which lets itself specialize on such junk is acting stupidly even though it is one of the greatest agencies and even though the policy brings in great profits for a while. Certainly there is a confession in it all that the agency does not have confidence in its ability to handle straight truth in a brilliant and effective way. Big and famous as it may be, its work advertises it as a trickster house, one which an honest advertiser should shun.

I think that the cigarette maker who talks about advertising no coughs is acting stupidly, though for

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the moment his appeal may be successful. If any cigarettes are bad for the throat, an exploitation of that fact even by inference is advertising against the extension of his own industry. If the appeal works, it will naturally decrease cigarette sales. For a while we may say of such an advertiser, "Oh, isn't he clever!" After a while we say, "I'm sick of his lies." I find myself trying to select one of the kinds of cigarettes I can like and whose makers seem to tell the fewest lies.

Advertising men must pay more attention to the actual personal needs of the consumer, to his income and economic needs, as well as to whims and vanities, and persuade their clients to do the same. We have been hitting people with vanity appeals for quite a while now, and false economics can go only so far before the backwash begins.

When the average reader of advertisements stops believing in the truth of advertisements, the advertising business will be in a bad way. When he begins to lose faith in advertisements, the power of advertising to sell goods will begin to wane. If that time ever comes, it will probably be a time such as the present, when the volume of advertising is at its greatest and still increasing.

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A Flood Warning

To the advertiser it is a very important question whether or not the buyer must beware. If the buyer must beware, then the advertiser must himself beware.

If the buyer must beware, he will. We Americans often look like awful fools to ourselves as well as to the rest of the world, but our public has proven again and again that it is a pretty shrewd and intelligent organism, with constantly rebounding ability to amend its own follies and blind faiths and ultimately come to sound judgment and reasonable opinions. Just as soon as the public begins to notice that it is getting an overdose of bunk, that right opposite the page where an honest manufacturer is telling the truth another page is flaunting the undying affection of some celebrity for a product which he had hardly heard of until the advertiser bought his name, then let the advertiser beware, because the flood picks up both the saint and the sinner as it sweeps along.

If you make the people demand proofs instead of buying on enthusiasm they won't buy so much. Fewer wheels will turn and fewer people will have jobs and spendable income from jobs. But faith and credit are responsible for volume and profit in business. The

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general public has a deep concern in this matter. There is no substitute for advertising which can do the same good either so economically or extensively. If advertising begins to be discredited, then the louder the shout, the less it will be believed.

Only a comparatively small portion of the buying public is interested in the profits made by the manufacturer. Almost everyone, however, is interested or can be made to be interested in the price of the goods he purchases and the relation of that price to the quality of the goods. In the long run the man with the better product at the right price can win over his opponents' snob appeal if he will put equal power into a sound and true appeal, no matter how unlikely this may seem for a little while.

When the truthful advertiser lets a competitor beat him through a false or snobbish appeal it is almost always because the competitor puts more power and drive into his promotion. The snobbish advertiser is encouraged by an easy takeoff. The snobs respond quickly, and that encourages him to go into big advertising, which of course is always effective.

When the great advertising agency which would be honest looks with wistful envy at the success of a rival house which is waxing fat on the profits of lying testimonials, and then says, "Everybody is do-

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ing it. Let us do it too," then and there it drops its title to the claim of honesty. Yet its founder may have worked years to get that title, and there may be uncounted values for years to come in maintaining it. These things are easy to forget, alas, when we see a competitor's present success.

"Be truthful in your statement" is the command of a natural law of industry. "Use great speed to get great power" is another. Often an unscrupulous man has won temporary success by application of the second law alone. Unite the two and the combination is unbeatable. The house of Tiffany, for example, has been protecting and promoting its own high position for many years with never a falsehood nor a misrepresentation.

Good Prices Are Sound Economics

The drive for cheapness of price is not always reasonable. We should stop and think that if a manufacturer cannot make good gross profits he cannot afford the distribution costs and advertising costs which enable him to distribute his goods in the stores where we can secure them, and to tell us about them so that we may know that such luxuries and conveniences exist. Advertising is a distribution convenience and worth something to the public for that rea-

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son. Moreover the public has learned to like modern advertising and does not want to give it up.

Our search for cheapness comes from only one side of us, the buying side. We also have the promotion side and the community side. We want the world to be prosperous. We honor the man who sows good business seed, tills his business soil, and reaps a fine crop. We do not begrudge him his wealth, we hope that in our way we may do the same as he has done, but when we suspect him of deceiving us for his own advantage and our loss, then we begrudge his profits and condemn his success. Both the promotion side and the community side of our makeup say, "If high prices make for employment and a sustained condition of business activity, then I am willing to pay prices which give a generous opportunity to the manufacturers; but I expect him to treat me as fairly as I treat him."

"Some in Jags, Some in Velvet Gowns"

Years ago our periodicals were full of the advertising of quack nostrums, consumption cures, cures for everything. Federal investigation and the Pure Food and Drug Act put a stop to many of those nostrums. The movement for honest advertising carried on by the vigilance committees helped the work along. Are

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these vigilance committees losing their vigilance? Or have they been hypnotized by good clothes and respectable standing? I suspect it is the latter. The beggars seem to be coming back dressed in velvet gowns.

The honest publications once went very shy on proprietary medicine advertising. To-day they exploit many cures and preventives, though the word medicine is not often used. Cure is implied without the use of a word with such a back kick. The old-fashioned quacks were at least honestly clad in rags and jags, and got honestly kicked out of polite society.

Appreciation Makes an Owner

The man who buys an Ampico or a Duo Art and learns to appreciate and love the library of music he can acquire with it really possesses it. The man who simply buys it as an appendage to his growing possessions and local notoriety does not possess it at all, because even with such a wonderful thing as a reproducing piano the whole splendid value lies in what it can do for the owner himself. Snob appeal would be disastrous to Ampico and Duo Art, which have much more nearly the right to use it than most of those who do.

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Snobbery is false perspective and so is injurious. It is as common as trousers and as dangerous as leprosy. Everybody knows it is so. A decent man detests that snobbery in himself which he recognizes in his rare moments of clear vision. But putting good taste on its merited pedestal, learning artistic personal adornment, fostering social grace, building for beauty and for an appreciation of cultured life—these are snobbery's reverse.

A Trip to Dreamland

Let us indulge in a fantastic dream. If on a given day every advertiser who employs an agency should go to his agent and say, "From now on no advertisement shall go out over the name of my firm which contains any statement that is not absolutely honest and true in spirit and form. Furthermore, no statement shall go out which by implication may suggest that my article will do more than it can be proven it normally does. You, my agent, will please understand that exaggeration, direct or in any way implied, is offensive to me and will not be tolerated.

"Furthermore, please understand that I want my appeal to be as strong as you can honestly make it to those who are logically my customers or can be educated to become so, and to such alone. I do not pro-

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pose to lie about my goods but I do propose to cry my wares. It is not my high sense of ethics which is demanding this attitude. It is my instinct for self-preservation."

What would happen? The agency would give itself a celebration. The copy man would probably get gloriously drunk. The titled and wealthy would have to finance their own charities. The publisher would have a celebration of his own. And to the public would be restored its right to believe advertisements, a right which it possessed only a few years ago.

Not As Bad As Sodom

Many advertisers have a code of exact truth and always have had. They have waxed large and strong on it. They have maintained the good name of advertising in maintaining their own good names. Some other advertisers think they have done the same thing when they haven't.

Advertising is the necessary message between producer and user. Its function was operative before its name was coined. It will last as long as the world lasts. The great industrial organizations are built on science. Dupont means a chain of industries founded on chemistry and it means other industries yet to come as fast as their laboratories for experiment and

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invention can show the way. General Motors means a chain of industries founded on physics, the mechanics of motion and its control.

The products of such houses go through a double test: first, will they work and gain acceptance through the fact that they are useful or desirable; and second, will they and the habit of their use endure and thus gain permanent good will. By the first test much of the kind of advertising I have been criticising is very good. It works. By the second test it is sure to fail because false advertising has no more right to permanent success than a poor fountain pen has.

I have in mind an advertising agent whose outstanding characteristics are absolute literal honesty and good practical sense. His business is not as large as the business of some competitors. I believe it would be impossible for him to permit any piece of copy to leave his house which might say or suggest a falsity or exaggeration. He has a stake in this matter of snob appeal. He couldn't make a snob appeal to save his soul, and he protests against it. He sees competitors working along this line and building up bigger billings than he has, and he is keen enough to see how they do it. To him it is unfair competition.

I have in mind an advertiser who makes as fine a

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product of its kind as he knows how to make and is absolutely stubborn in his determination that not one word of exaggeration shall ever be said about it. He is getting a bit sore about the way a competitor seems to be getting away with exaggerated statement and implied untruths. What are these two going to do about it? Well, I believe they can do much if they will, because I believe also that they represent the majority of advertisers.

The danger in false advertising is that it is clever, well dressed, handsome, and sponsored by some of the very big and prosperous houses, houses so important as to make it seem that what they do must be right, and the man who criticizes them must be wrong.

But the false can never be as ultimately powerful as the true. Advertising is going to last forever, because advertising is the voice of progressive business. The forms of advertising will always adapt themselves to meet conditions that prevail, both in the story which business has to tell and in the manner in which the ear of the public likes to have that message sounded. But if honesty and brilliant inventive genius are essential in progressive business, they are equally essential in the formulation of its message.

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There remains the important question, in which direction is the present organization of this great industry headed? Is it intrinsically sound? Or will the people at last kick it or laugh it out of existence?

CHAPTER XV

Where Are We Going and How Do We Get There?

A Few of the Trail-blazers

HOW do we get to where we go from here? Only partly by the already established trunk lines, and only partly with the present crew of conductors and switchmen, and yet we can learn much from these.

We have no right to judge the men now prominent in advertising except by their public performances, but the things they do which affect the public become public property. If they do worthy things they are entitled to praise. If they do unworthy things they invite censure.

These men have been pioneers. The pioneer stage in advertising is not yet over even though the straight-line production stage has arrived. Most of the men prominent in agency work have helped largely in making a real industry out of advertising. The ones named whose works are discussed here are

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in a sense specimens of able and successful agency practitioners.

Just a short time ago two copy writers started the firm of Young and Rubicam. Their success was rapid from the outset. Almost from the start they have shown signs of being the pace setters the industry needs. They have won because they have produced brilliant, beautiful and convincing advertisements and quickly made a reputation for copy production. They secured some very important and large national accounts. They jumped right into a large-volume business on the strength of their reputation for copy. They have already contributed a part of the answer to the question of how to get to where we are going. Their answer is advance in the quality of advertisements.

What is going to happen to them is another matter. Will their clients permit them to continue to be brilliantly professional? Or will Mr. Young and Mr. Rubicam be forced to be business executives, financiers, organizers of research bureaus, market analysts, purveyors of extra service, unofficial sales managers, personal diplomats and general handy men? Undoubtedly pressure has been brought to bear on them to do this thing and that which they had not dreamed of when they started to get business through being

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thorough craftsmen in advertising. I fancy I can see a great value to advertising, now and in the time to come, in having such a man as Raymond Rubicam in a position where he would have nothing much to think of except writing and its relation to the sale of goods. He may be in just that position. I hope he is.

But the detailed business side of a successful advertising house has become an overwhelmingly insistent thing. So few agencies in recent years have taken the stand that copy production is overwhelmingly the most important thing an agency can offer that it seems very hard for one to plant that stake and keep it stuck down.

The account executive is still in the picture. He has been selling multifarious activities of his house and doesn't know how to sell copy especially well, particularly copy that has not yet been written and exists only in the potentiality of the writer. He and the writer bring in the money. The executive is supposed to be the impersonation of the good will of his accounts. He is generally a vigorous man, very often a popular man, but he is not always a wise man, and copy to him may be just a necessary part of the merchandise he sells. The firm executive wants his house to improve its work, of course, but is he a man big enough to do nothing but plan things for the good of

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the house? Such a one, to the producer of billings, looks like an added drain on profits—more overhead. "That's what the head of the copy department is for, anyway," he says. And thus the master brain, if there is one, is driven to work on to-day's troubles instead of to-morrow's progress, and advertising agencies are organized and conducted, not with an eye to the future but with the need to hold and increase this year's billings always in the foreground.

Thus a part of the way that we shall go to where we are going is as it has been, through opportunism and expensive adaptations. "Floundering through" has always been a favorite method and will be until engineering takes its real place. But it will be hard for engineering to take that place until we have learned what engineering is and can be made to be in advertising.

One Kind of Business Wealth

Ernest Calkins, President of Calkins and Holden, seems to have made a great fortune out of his work in advertising. I haven't the slightest idea whether that fortune consists largely in dollars or not. I have an idea, though, that very few have ever come as near to doing just about as they pleased in advertising as has Mr. Calkins, and a finer fortune than that

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is hard to figure. Mr. Calkins even seems to permit himself to keep and use a sense of humor and an artistic appreciation of fine things. He seems to have been interested in finding out how beautiful and interesting advertising can be and still be good advertising. His house is a high spot of illumination in our search for how we shall get there. He and his associates have apparently elected a cultural development of themselves, while engaged in the business of helping Thomas, Richard and Henry to build good will and sell goods.

These things are not inconsistent with one another, but a big blare of personal trumpets is inconsistent with them. Again, an attempt at careful selection of such clients as are in natural accord with such a house, while it does bring fine clients, is not calculated to bring many of those bright, impatient souls who must get rich over night or know the reason why. Yet these are the men who demonstrate the high-power quality of great expenditures, just as such firms as Calkins and Holden and a few others demonstrate the abiding effect of beautiful work. Naturally a house of this sort specializes more on quality work than on the driving force of great smashes of advertising, and so it, too, does not point out all the way that we must go. For if we analyze the advertising

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successes of the present and the immediate past, we are forced to the conclusion that quantity or space is quite as important as what goes in it, at least from the standpoint of quick results and rapid growth.

Doing It on the Big Scale

The great consolidations of industry have often been the direct result of successful advertising.

The house of Campbell & Ewald of Detroit is at this writing in charge of some gigantic campaigns of automobile advertising. Theirs is the problem of trying to get full power out of mass attacks. Naturally they work with big spaces and many of them. Anything which they can do in the way of copy improvement is the addition of a few per cent. of efficiency, or perhaps many per cent., to campaigns which should be expected to win anyhow because of their size and speed.

With such sums of money as are supposed to be appropriated by some of the branches of General Motors, space is a great factor. Copy improvement in such cases is economy of effort on something already highly productive of results. If, however, competition meets them on a space basis, then copy becomes the vital factor in their advertising. I know nothing at all of the steps which Campbell & Ewald is taking

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to perpetuate its future, but I can imagine such a firm as keenly alive to have some fine brain devote itself to the job of analyzing opportunities and projecting a future of progress and perpetual solvency of achievement. Campbell and Ewald are forced by their success to point out much of the way which advertising will travel, particularly when the motive force can be large and adequate appropriations of money.

The other day I heard an eminent publisher quoted as having said that every publishing house should have one able man, entirely detached from editing, printing or selling, who should give his whole time to projecting the future: finding the kinds of books which should be written, finding the men to write them, planning to supply literary needs rather than just expecting authors to turn up with something saleable. Such engineering, either in advertising or publishing, would be an encouragement to the brilliant free lances who come through with creative products.

If more and more advertising is to be placed by enormous corporations, then the agent who would serve corporations has two problems: first to give them the advertising they need, and second to keep them from confusing with advertising some of the

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promotive activities that might hamper the production of superlative advertising.

Many of the great advertising successes have been made with relatively inferior copy, but with such a sweeping and persuading use of the product name that it lodges and persists in the consciousness of millions. Unquestionably, however, where Greek meets Greek in massive campaign against massive campaign, the quality of copy is of supreme importance, just as it is when the appropriation is too small to give the campaign sufficient speed, and superlative copy is needed to make up for the lack of it.

Success of the Socratic Method

I have heard it said that wherever J. K. Fraser is, there will be an active advertising agency; that if the Blackman Company of which he is the head should suddenly vanish, still Fraser would be doing business as an advertising agent and doing it notably well.

Fraser is undoubtedly a keen thinker, a man who seeks confidently for true answers to the profound questions of business promotion. Such men are, as a rule, too busy doing things either to care much for reputations as business philosophers, or to do the speech-making or writing to give them such reputations, but their work helps to codify business philos-

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ophy. Such men's minds are always full of important unanswered questions.

While advertising should not be an imitative business, it is true that advertising agents learn much from each other's performances. Fraser, in the way he secured and has handled one very important account, has taught his competitors a great deal. One thing he brought to light in securing it is the fact that an advertiser is almost always open to a new move, even when his agency connection has lasted for many years and appears to be perpetual.

Several things conspire to make old connections permanent. Agency and client know each other thoroughly. The agent knows the client's merchandise and his customers. He has had a hand in forming client's sales policies. They have become almost blood brothers. Their business intimacy has often developed into very warm personal affection. Competitors say, "No chance to get that account. Client and agent have been married for twenty years."

A bold competitor, however, wonders if it isn't time for a divorce, especially if this intimacy has settled into habitual routine instead of inspirational and progressive performance. Suppose he is an intelligent critic of advertising as well as an able producer of it. He sees the obvious need of new life in

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the sales promotion of this "wedded" advertiser. He goes to him with the basic question, "Is all well with your advertising?" He analyzes conditions as he sees them, outlines the requirements which have been neglected, and if he is able and sound in what he says, he may bring about a totally unexpected change in agency connection and land for himself a new chance to do a notable job. This will be a big surprise to those who thought the old agency connection could never be broken.

A striking thing about Fraser is his ability to ask questions. Comparatively few men understand and practice this fine art. In the hands of a master it is doubly effective as applied to advertising solicitation, because the questionee likes to answer pointed and intelligent queries about his business. His business is his greatest interest. Showing ability by the kind of questions one asks is often a very pleasant contrast to the usual sales performance of making claims. A master of questioning is able to reveal both his keenness of interest and his capacity for practical objective reasoning.

Some men can best conceive a picture in cameo size, others want to see it cover the side of a mountain. To-day we have and to-morrow we will have advertising campaigns of mountain size, where single ad-

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vertisements are but details in a great picture in which they must all harmonize and together make a beautiful whole. Fraser seems to have this vision, this blend of logical and harmonious conception with a vigorous promotive faculty. Like Erickson, Erwin and Wasey, Lasker and Armstrong, he is a man to study, whether you can or should believe in all his ideas or not.

A history of the personal strength and the personal influence of other advertising pioneers would be of great value in projecting the future development of advertising. These able men, most of whom I have not named, and a growing list of able younger men, are making their imprints on the future of advertising.

Organization has been an important lesson for agencies to learn. Consolidation of business into great industries seems to be the high light in the picture of business progress to-day. A great advertising organization is rather naturally in sympathy with a great manufacturing organization.

We Must Mention Henry Ford

We have recently been treated to an interesting and highly educational episode in advertising.

Because Henry Ford is reputed to be the richest

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man in the world we felt he must be the wisest. Still we wondered why he stuck so long to an out-of-date model while competition was making such great inroads on his market.

N. W. Ayer and Son has been a great advertising house a good many years. It undoubtedly held first rank in volume for a long time. It has called itself "advertising headquarters." It has been known as a great organization even during those years when other agencies were rather loosely knit together. It has always been a house for competition to reckon with, rich, resourceful, famous, confident in its own highly organized staff and in its broad and important connections. It has given a high rating to brilliancy and has succeeded accordingly.

The Ford Motor Company selected N. W. Ayer and Son to exploit its new model. The Ayer job of exploiting it was a masterly one, both in its advertising and press news features. Rarely indeed has there been an equal opportunity to do such an immense job so thoroughly and so quickly. It was done thoroughly and quickly. Advertisements and news features were synchronized, and whether or not we were in the slightest degree interested in a purchase, we were all on the Ford band wagon to the extent of being agog to see this modern miracle of speed and

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low price. The Ayer handling of the Ford job is certainly a high light on the question of how to focus rapidly and vividly on a new product of an already famous house.

These new cars could not be produced fast enough to supply demand. Why, then, this over-sale through advertising? Of course we didn't know. We were not even sure the Ford Company knew. But we must speculate on that, whether we could get the answer or not. The doings of these Fords are interesting front page news. We could see one possible advantage from a premature advertising and publicity campaign—it might make purchasers delay buying until the new Fords were to be obtained. That would at least hamper competition for a while, although asking the public to wait for anything is not usually a profitable way to advertise.

After this big campaign had begun and after production was well under way, we were treated to the news that because of the way the brakes were constructed in the new car it had failed to pass the legal requirements of safety in more than one state, and that deliveries must be further delayed.

If all these things had happened in a business of small capital, the business would probably have gone

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broke and we should have felt it was the fault of the management.

Great Houses Can Make Mistakes

An immense surplus, a background of enormous wealth, the ability to make costly mistakes and yet live, these are the things we think of now in connection with the Ford enterprises. A tendency to make such mistakes would brand a smaller firm as incompetent, yet Ford competence is unquestioned in spite of mistakes. Perhaps mistakes are an unavoidable accompaniment to competence. Of course the Ford news value was not destroyed, and of course the new car is having a great sale.

The pathway to industrial progress is not well paved by carelessness on the part of anyone. And though these are often covered up, great corporations often make very costly mistakes. Sometimes they permit overhead investment on the basis of a much larger volume than is possible to obtain, sometimes they restrict the possible volume by insufficient overhead to take care of it. Advertising agents may sometimes make attractive profits on emergency jobs made necessary by error or neglect on the part of great corporations, but these are distress jobs rather than steady promotion.

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If Ford makes a great mistake, comparatively few newspapers stress it. Ford is a model to the people. We have elected to admire him as the epitome of success, a remarkable success built upon serving the country with usable transportation at a very low relative cost. In addition to being a business, he is an admired personality. We do not want bad news about Ford.

The Ford enterprises are enormous. So are those of General Motors, of the Radio Corporation, of the Postum Company, of the American Telephone and Telegraph, of the United States Steel Corporation, of more than one great oil company, of several tobacco companies, bread-baking companies, theatrical organizations, transportation corporations and so on. The Stock Exchanges carry these imposing and important lists. But the great size of these enterprises does not make them immune from error, it rather tends to multiply their capacity for error. The men who run them are not always the best men they could get. They are simply the men they have got. Just men, they are, not demigods. In many cases the strongest individual men they ever had were the pioneers who built them up from small beginnings. Later they may have been keener for organization men than for men of genius.

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A Conservation Job

Conservation is to become as important an advertising problem as promotion. A volume of a billion a year or a quarter of a billion a year has a very serious problem of maintenance, of consolidating consumer good will, keeping it in repair, keeping it working even if volume is at or near the saturation point.

Because twenty advertisers to one have needed promotion beyond anything else, the advertising agent has thought of his work only in terms of promotion. The development of gigantic enterprises is bound to make the agent think more and more in terms of conserving consumer good will and solidifying trade good will. That may call for only slight difference in advertising technique, but even a slight difference is very important.

There are great corporations which fancy they do not need advertising, though they do recognize a great need of press agent or public relations service. These corporations do need the perpetuation of consumer good will, and when the agent looks beyond immediate promotion and learns what advertising can do for preservation and conservation, he will be able to make some of them his clients.

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So far, most people who have advertised have been persuaded to advertise. They have been hunted out and been sold. Now many of them are out on their own initiative to buy advertising service.

Of course there will be new promotive enterprises, more of them than ever as I see it. Now and then an able man in a steel corporation or a textile corporation or a corporation of some other kind, having learned the industry, is bound to see how he could do things himself which he cannot do because of the restrictions of his organization. If he is of the promotive organization type he will go out and raise capital and organize a competitive business. In some respects this may be harder to do than it was once, in other respects easier. Competition will continue to spring up in all sorts of ways as it always has done. Every great corporation wants at least one great competitor for the general good of the industry, though he can't always limit it to one.

No Such Thing As a Last Word

Great corporations may be able to grasp a large part of the present trade, but even now they are dealing with only small percentages of perpetual trade, and the strongest of them are open to success-

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ful competition of able smaller firms. I believe they always will be.

Has the system of independent retailing fallen down? Is the department store system falling down? Is the chain store the ultimate distributor? Must the manufacturer be a retailer also to ensure living profits? There are always many who believe that the end has arrived or is in sight. Some of them will answer yes to each of these questions, but the fact is that nobody can give a catagorical yes or no to any of those questions. We have begun to see the manifest faults of each of these systems, and wise individuals are correcting them to their own profit. Some independents are doing better than ever. Some department stores are stronger than ever. A few manufacturers have done well at retailing their output. What the ultimatists forget is that experiment and change in business method is perpetual history in industry—old history, new history, and the inevitable history of the future.

Public Relations

Many great organizations esteem the matter of public relations to be a vital one and are selecting men of reputation or high ability as their public relations counsels. Sometimes these are men of legal

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training, sometimes they are men of editorial training. Ultimately many of them will be men of advertising training. Advertising is the great appeal made to the public to support a corporation by buying its wares. It can build the corporation's strongest friends because it can make so many of them.

When a corporation keeps its public relations activities apart from its advertising it is taking the risk of lack of coördination. Interesting news that can be given to the press, legal matters that have to do with the public's rights with reference to the corporation, the value and standing of its stock, all pertain as does the paid advertising to the good will of the concern, and all affect one another.

Just as the advertising agent who knows the financial and public relations problems of his client seems to have a firmer grip on that client's business, so the general head of public relations has a more complete grasp of his whole province when he is conversant with and sympathetic to his firm's advertising procedure and in touch with their agency.

Private Relations

Perhaps as important as public relations is the great subject of private relations, internal relationships, employment, wages, promotion opportunity,

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and all those things which make the holding of any particular job a good thing or not from the worker's point of view.

Advertising will have a hand in this tremendous and most important thing as soon as it has fitted itself to take part. So far it has not fitted itself, for here it must delve deeply into the psychology of individual lives, not merely the psychology of developing the lust for purchase. Persuading a man to buy something is a trifling matter compared with helping him learn how to live. Personally I believe this will be the greatest service privilege which advertising can hope to have, though it will not run into the money volume which great consumer campaigns will show.

As soon as a business grows big it becomes a community of interest. Its directors, whether they want to or not, become responsible for the welfare of their workers. Willy-nilly they become educators of their people. They can't successfully fool them. They have almost given up trying to. They see that profits lie in the kind of internal good will which breeds energy and vigor. They know that it is not enough to say to a workman, "This is your business, be true to it." They must show him why it is his business and how he can be true to it. Other people who have the work-

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man's ear stand ready to show up the bunk in the messages which his firm gives him, so there would best be no bunk in them. A splendid art of the future is the development of internal advertising.

The mediums for such advertising are several. First, house organs designed to spread the personal news of the institution, to state and explain internal policies, to amuse, to entertain, and to build good will. These house papers need the highest editorial skill in their handling. Second, bulletin boards whose contents should be newsy, fresh and interesting, bunk and hokum to be religiously kept off. Third, letters, bulletins, memoranda of various sorts. Fourth, and very important, the consumer advertising should be shown to employees and their interest in it intelligently stimulated.

"More advertising, and still more advertising? When will it ever end?" says the manufacturer. It is easy to see that the right amount of advertising is measured by the number and quality of messages needed, externally and internally, to promote the business successfully. Any other criterion is foolish.

The Agent Must Fight for His Own

If the client is fighting for economy of advertising operation, the agency must be able to fight for ade-

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quacy of advertising as well as for a reasonable profit for himself. If the agent is a very competent man, a reasonable profit for himself is more than if he were a little man. Who knows how long the present uniform percentage of agency compensation shall last? It seems to be fair and a percentage plan is easy to operate, but it has been sniped at for many years. If it should ever be changed, the agent must see to it that he is not the loser, for the promotion of business will suffer if the men who can create promotion messages are driven into other occupations.

We shall undoubtedly see a further growth of the progressive agencies of the present day. We must also expect to see some new firms demonstrate their power by focusing on the two items, preparation of copy and appraisal of mediums. The kind of advertising house which I expect to see rot away and disappear is the kind which has been working for a formula of procedure, thinks it has found it and has settled itself in a rut of standardized performance at a time when the big thing is a constant search for ever new standards.

We already have seen some mergers of great advertising houses. The merger idea is a fascinating one. Often a merger works out so as to disprove mathematics and shows that one and one added together

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may be made to equal two and a half or three. The two great firms of Batten and of Barton, Durstine and Osborne have combined themselves into one. It seems like a logical combination, as they had been operating on similar lines. No doubt other advertising agencies are casting about to see with whom they can merge. What chance will be left for the small agency?

A Future for the Small Agency

I can see a better future than ever for the small agency, provided it is handled by men who can really function as personal counselors and can confine their natural desire to expand within the confines of what they can do well personally. If the merger idea can scare out the select individual, probably he is not so select. If he is of the type which shines in personal work, the business world is still going to have a place for him in spite of mergers. Not all the able men can fit into great organizations. Some resist the lure of organization salaries and play their own hands successfully, and it will always be so. The elephant may or may not be smarter than the fox. In either case it isn't his size which makes him so.

I expect to see, and soon, a generally observed code of truth in advertising. That is something which

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can be standardized. Fair play to the public and equal opportunity to advertisers both demand it. The publisher holds this bag and will always be at fault until he enforces these requirements in his columns. I look for the development of able writers and advertising artists, of more advertising managers of the intellectually appreciative type. And I think advertising is on its way to be more beautiful and more powerful.

One cannot be any less optimistic who knows that the twentieth century is better than the nineteenth, and that the law of the world is progress.

Jobs for the Young

It is no wonder that so many bright young men and women are fascinated by the idea of advertising as a life occupation. It is dynamic. It is picturesque. It is art, oratory and drama. It is many things in one, and this is true of life itself.

For some decades we have been in an age of specialization. Now we begin to learn that specialization is applied best by one who keeps on building a background of broad culture. A complicated automobile is an easier thing to handle than a simple crowbar.

Advertising on the whole has more than kept pace with the improvement in the things advertised. And its charm increases as products improve and become

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better worth the genius of the writer and the artist. Its future is enough uncertain to intrigue the sportsman and lure the enthusiast. What if the same things can be said of many occupations, all of which are calling capable youth? If advertising were the only glorious occupation it could only advertise itself.

The young man in the advertising business is asking, "Shall I build a place for myself within a great organization or shall I get a start with something small and help it grow? Maybe I am not the rare genius I hope I am, but it is a lot of fun to operate as if I might be." The answer is, start with something large or small, according to your taste or opportunity, but base your business ethics and build your business training around the most important fact in business, the fact that the consumer is the great and absolute boss. As for bunk, it is on its way out, but of course not all of it. We shall always want some bunk to whet our appetite for reality.

The consumer is boss of the banker, the corporation president, and the senator. If you want to win, play square with the consumer. Don't fool yourself because the consumer does not always know that he is boss. He is learning fast.

EPILOGUE

IN the old temple of Demos the gods would meet in the deepest darkness of the night, for then they could see most clearly, and then too the humans were asleep and had no troubles with which to worry the gods. No judgments had to be passed, no disputes had to be settled, no culprit had to be punished. The fickle and emotional children called men were all pure in sleep.

The god Pragmos was holding forth. "I have a plan to submit to almighty Zelos. I think it a most sensible and practical plan. The deepest philosophy is its parent."

The other gods were anxious to hear this mighty plan, for Pragmos was great in power and mind. He it was who kept the immortal records. He it was who brought order out of the chaos of the thoughts and deeds of all the gods. Thousands of years later, after many nations and languages had risen, striven and died, he was to be known in another tongue as the god Efficiency and worshiped more than ever.

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So, after a pause of serious contemplation, Pragmos went on and this is what he said: "Men cause us great worry. We think we have raised them near to godhood, and, alas, the sordid clay shows through again. We arouse them to great thoughts and deeds, but these thoughts and deeds never endure. We think our children have become men, we turn our backs, and, lo, they are foolish quarrelsome children again."

All must fain agree with the premise of Pragmos, for none could deny it.

"One more premise," said Pragmos. "Our duty is to bring men to perfection and keep them there, or come as near to that as we may."

Again all must agree.

"Then, my first two premises being accepted, I am sure that you must see the logic of my conclusion. We will make of time one constant night of sleep. Asleep, our charges are perfect. Let us keep them perfect the only way we can, by keeping them asleep. Look upon them now, —are they not beautiful? Asleep they are perfect. Let us keep them thus and our duty is done for all eternity. Otherwise, I warn you, they will awake to love and hate, to breed and bicker,

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to strive and slobber, to be the pitiful things they have been to the end of all time."

Such a mighty cheer of assent went up from the assembled gods that, had the ears of men been attuned, it must surely have awakened them all. But still they slumbered on, even as they always do whenever a protective god or man tries to herd them into a lethal chamber. But later they awoke, as they always do.

Why did they wake? Because Publos, messenger of the gods, would otherwise have been without a job. If the gods had no more work to do with men, there would be no more messages. With no messages, how might there be a messenger? And so Publos fought for his livelihood, just as gods and men always will.

Said he: "The fates have decreed that we must fight for soul life in men. The great duty of gods is to serve men. Men are not made that we may see them as beautiful, but we are made that men may have justice and space to grow. That is why Pragmos must grow in power through the ages, and why I too must grow. Often shall we two fight against each other, even as now. Many times that struggle shall be bitter. Often it may seem to be even to the

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death. Some time in distant ages the gods may see and men may see that Pragmos and Publos draw their blood from the same artery of life, and if one is killed the other must die too. When the power to strive shall die and the power to communicate shall die, the world itself shall be alive no longer."

No cheer greeted the words of Publos, but as he finished the cock crew, and stragglingly men began to rub sleep from their eyes. With lagging steps the gods went about their daily tasks among the striving and slobbering men.

The plan of Pragmos was never submitted to almighty Zelos.

For men would not have it that way, as Publos their champion well knew. And so Publos has grown in power, for men will have it that way. He is a beautiful god, for a messenger must be beautiful and swift and sure.

THE
JOHN DAY



COMPANY
INC.



